

M E M O I R S
O F
MAXIMILIAN DE BETHUNE,
D U K E O F S U L L Y,
PRIMÉ MINISTER TO
H E N R Y T H E G R E A T.

C O N T A I N I N G
The History of the LIFE and REIGN of that MONARCH,
and his own ADMINISTRATION under Him.

Translated from the FRENCH, by the Author of the
F E M A L E Q U I X O T E.

To which is added,
The TRYAL of RAVAILLAC for the Murder of
H E N R Y t h e G R E A T.

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M E M O I R S

MAXIMILIAN OF AUSTRIA

OF THE

PRINCE OF AUSTRIA

HENRY OF AUSTRIA



THE HISTORY OF THE
PRINCE OF AUSTRIA

BY
THE

THE

IN FIVE VOLUMES

A NEW EDITION

VOL. II.

BOND

Printed for J. Richardson and Son, 1, New Street, London, E. C. 4.

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MILK

A
S U M M A R Y

OF THE

Books contained in the SECOND VOLUME:

SUMMARY of the SEVENTH
BOOK.

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MEMOIRS

OF

SULLY.

BOOK VII.

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I CONTINUED no longer in the camp before Laon after this event. Some difficulties which arose in the treaties, particularly that with the baron de Medavy, obliged me, in obedience to his majesty's orders, to take a journey to Rouch, which was followed by a second to Paris, and another, more considerable than both, to Sedan. The duke of Bouillon gave daily new occasions of discontent to the king. When, thro' his majesty's interest, he had married the heirs of Sedan, he promised to bring him a certain number of troops; but he not only neglected to perform this promise, but also retained, without asking the king's permission, the troops which he had lent him to guard his frontier till he was in peaceable possession of his new principality; nor did he make any excuse for not sending them back, or give him any account of the situation of his affairs. His new grandeur inspired him with the vanity of making himself be looked upon as a formidable potentate in Europe. This, which he could not hope from a state so weak and confined as his, he sought to obtain by all sorts of artifices and intrigues in the neighbouring courts. All the malecontents in Eu-

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rope were sure of finding a protector in him, and
he was the main spring that gave motion to the cabals of Auvergne and Entragues.

One day when the king sent for me so early in the morning that I found him in bed, having only Ozéray and Armagnac in his apartment, and that we were all consulting upon measures to prevent the dangerous designs of so many secret enemies, his majesty dwelt in particular upon the duke of Bouillon, and seemed greatly affected with his ingratitude, after having conferred an obligation on him which ought to have bound him for ever to his interests. In effect, the king, by promoting his marriage with mademoiselle de Bouillon, had given him a proof of friendship so much the stronger, in that he acted against his own judgment, and the advice of all those to whom he had mentioned it.

The next day after this conversation had passed, Beringhen presented a gentleman to the king, in his chamber, who brought him a letter from Bouillon, in which the duke informed his majesty of the death of his wife, and excused his delay, by the grief and perplexity into which her death had thrown him. This letter likewise gave the king to understand, that madam de Bouillon had left a will, in which she bequeathed the principality of Sedan and all her estates to her husband, and put them under the protection of the king of France; because it was expected, that her relations would give the duke of Bouillon great disturbance about this donation. "That is to say," said the king when he had finished reading the letter, "that the duke of Bouillon has occasion for my assistance: Is not this a very honourable way of proceeding?"

To humble and punish the duke, his majesty was strongly inclined to leave him to struggle alone against these difficulties; but the native sweetness of his disposition, and the remembrance of the duke's former services, still influenced him in his favour. He answered the duke by a compliment of condol-
lance

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lance upon the death of the duchess of Bouillon; and assured him of his willingness to assist him. If the king had thought that this last mark of his friendship would have recalled and fixed the duke of Bouillon for ever in his duty, the commission of him whom he sent with this letter would have ended in barely delivering it to the duke; and any inconsiderable person might have sufficed for that; but this prince, accustomed to confer benefits only on the ungrateful, would make this deputation answer several purposes. He turned towards me, and told me, that in his opinion I was the properest person to carry this letter, because if of itself it was not able to make Bouillon adhere constantly to his duty, the arguments of a man, who had a right to represent it to him strongly, might perhaps accomplish it; and thus, if neither produced the desired effect, it was necessary to penetrate into the duke's secret designs, and to examine carefully the will and the supposed donation of madam de Bouillon.

This embassy seemed too like that which had drawn the hatred of the princess and count of Soissons upon me; and my first emotions upon receiving it were caused by my grief that the king's service generally engaged me in such affairs. Henry, who guessed part of my thoughts, forgot nothing which he imagined capable of lessening what was disagreeable in this commission: he told me, That the success which fortune seemed to annex to all affairs wherein I was employed, as a reward due to my fidelity, induced him to chuse me, preferably to any other, to transact this business: That none of my services were lost upon him: And that he took extremely kind the attention I always shewed to avoid or break off any connections which were capable of cooling my zeal for him. Speaking these words, he embraced me tenderly; adding, with a kindness that went to my heart, that he earnestly intreated me to be careful of my own security,

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since I should be obliged to pass through places subject to the Guises, and to preserve myself for a prince who loved me. Princes who behave in this manner cannot be too faithfully served.

It happened very fortunately that I was at that time very well provided with money, having sent for remittances from Rosny and Moret, where my wife was; therefore I saw myself in a condition to satisfy, without delay, the king's impatience for my departure. Three hours after I had received this order I went to Bruyeres, where my equipage lay, and, followed by five and twenty troopers well armed, in four days I arrived, without meeting with any bad accident, within view of Sedan. The duke, being informed of my arrival, came to meet me as far as the village of Torcy, which separates this little state from France; there he alighted, and assumed a melancholy air to receive my compliments, and to read the king's letter. He loaded me with personal civilities; seemed charmed with the choice his majesty had made; and persisted (notwithstanding my repeated instances) to treat me as an ambassador. I was conducted to very magnificent lodgings, and all the expences of my retinue defrayed. He shewed me, with great complaisance, the fortifications he had raised about his castle of Sedan, by which, he assured me, it would be impregnable. I was not of the same opinion; all the expence the duke was at to strengthen this place, could not supply the defect of its situation.

The siege of Laon, of which the duke enquired some news, afforded us matter for entering into a more particular conversation. After reiterated assurances of his attachment to the king, the duke asked me, if the many subjects of complaint which his majesty had received from the Spanish Low Countries, had not determined him to carry the war there; and spoke to me of this project, as an affair he ardently wished to see executed. He dwelt much upon the advantage of this war; upon the manner

manner in which the provinces of Luxembourg, Liege, and Namur, might be attacked; upon the correspondences which, with this view, he carried on in the principal cities of Flanders; and upon the powerful assistance he offered to lead there. It was not difficult to believe, that he had used his utmost endeavours to promote a war, of which all the advantage would be his: but it was far from being so with the king. His interest was not concerned in it; and with regard to him, this fine project was a mere chimera. Indeed the duke, fearing that at court it would be treated with contempt, omitted nothing which he thought might bring me to approve of it, by painting it in the finest colours, and with an air of disinterestedness capable of imposing upon me. After having thus discoursed upon Flanders, he plunged into politics, and displayed all the powers of his eloquence in proving to me, that, it being the king's chief interest to depress the house of Austria, he could never attain this end but by keeping up a strict union with the protestants. The king's late abjuration he supposed was but a necessary ceremony, which had only changed him in appearance; and which he thought to prove sufficiently, by two or three strokes of raillery upon some superstitious practices of devout catholics, upon the mendicant monks, and the equivocations of the jesuits.

The duke of Bouillon stopped here, like a man who was afraid to explain himself too freely, and looked upon me earnestly with a feigned inquietude. Hitherto I had listened to him without interruption; and discovered, without his perceiving it, all the ideas which rose in that ambitious brain. But many things still remained to be known, for which it was only necessary to let him speak a long time; for it is not possible but that a man, who is at once extremely vain, and a great talker, should, at length, betray all his secrets; I therefore forced a smile into my countenance, and assumed the air of

1594. one filled with admiration of his wit, his policy, and his eloquence. The duke's self-love thus agreeably flattered, he did not wait for much intreaty, but resuming his discourse, he went on to make me sensible of the true interest of the protestants, in the situation affairs were at present in France. Here it became necessary for me to supply, by my own surmises, what he left unsaid; either because the duke of Bouillon's expression suffered a little from the constraint he laid himself under, for fear of falling into some indiscretion*, or that he thought the affectation of a mysterious air did more honour to himself and the party, or indeed, that his discourse was built on a system so sublime, and ideas so abstracted, that he likewise was lost in it as well as I.

I recalled the duke from this too elevated flight; and he told me in terms more plain, that the protestants were so much disgusted at the king's conversion, that he could allay their apprehensions no otherwise, than by declaring war against Spain conjointly with them; that, unless this was done, it would be impossible to persuade them that they were not made a sacrifice of, and for the future would be always exposed to the violences of the French catholics acting in concert with the pope and the Spaniards. This piece of intelligence,

* The true character of the duke de Bouillon, is thus given us: "On set purpose he used to express himself, says the writer of his life, in so dark and perplexed a manner, that he could give to what he spoke any sense that he pleased. He pretended that there were some nice conjunctures, in which a man must either be silent, or follow his manner of speaking." Another maxim of the duke de Bouillon's, according to the same writer, was, "That a man ought to be very cautious of giving any thing un-

der his hand. A man interprets what he has spoken as he pleases; and he agrees only to so much of it as he thinks proper, retrenching more or less. He approves or disapproves as he thinks convenient. But the case is not the same with regard to what is written," &c. M. de Sully was of a quite contrary opinion. We may find some politicians, who will not condemn the duke de Bouillon; but none who does not commend the duke de Sully.

from

from the proof he brought of it, it is probable the duke himself thought as false as it really was. He said that Villeroi was commissioned by the dukes of Lorraine, Maïenne, and Mercœur, to propose to the king, who was then at Fontainbleau, this union between France and Spain; and that the pope would not have refused the king his apostolic benediction, with a bull, acknowledging him king of France, but because he would have this union the preliminary. To this proof Bouillon added others equally groundless, by which he thought to make it appear, that the catholics had wholly estranged the king from the protestants, and had prevailed upon him to use them with great injustice. The grievances of the protestants thus established, the duke was willing to inform me of the remedy they had thought proper to apply. They were preparing, he said, to fortify immediately all their strong towns, to chuse a leader out of the kingdom, and within it (but the place he did not name) to establish a general council for the affairs of religion, to which all the different churches were to address themselves; and which was to determine, in the last resort, all the affairs of the ten other provincial councils, into which the calvinist part of France was to be divided; and that the power of this sovereign council might be absolute and uncontested, a protector or foreign prince was to be put at its head, capable of making it respected.

Whilst he was talking of these subjects, the duke of Bouillon, according to the occasion he had to dazzle, convince, or deceive me, assumed successively the character of a friend and ally of the king's, a good protestant, or a mere relator of facts, but always that of a man consummate in the politician's art, and the depository of all the secret affairs of the protestants. He could not, however, involve himself so well in mystery, but that I comprehended plainly enough, that all these schemes of high and low councils, these regulations so par-

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particularised, might very probably have their rise in the duke's own brain, and not in the synods of St. Naixant, and St. Foi, as he would have had me believe. This foreign prince for protector, especially, seemed to me to be entirely his own invention, and in reality himself, who gave his own views for determined schemes, and whose sole end (for what springs will not ambition put in motion?) was perhaps merely this; that, by communicating these designs to the court, as if the calvinists had really formed them, and were ready to put them in execution, I should raise the king's indignation against them; and by this artifice he would oblige the huguenots to take such a resolution as he wished, but durst not openly inspire them with; which was, to chuse him for a leader, whom the hatred and complaints of the catholics pointed out to them for a defender. All that happened in the sequel has but the more confirmed me in this belief.

After having thus, as he imagined, made me subservient to his designs, the duke reflected that he should lose more than he gained, if the king, of whose assistance he stood in need, should entertain any suspicion to his disadvantage; he therefore reserved a most refined stroke of policy for the last. This was to assure me, that these proposals had indeed been made him, but that, far from approving them, or offering his assistance, he had done every thing in his power to prevent such designs taking place; in which he had not the good fortune to succeed. Can any thing be imagined more treacherous and crafty? Certainly, if the duke of Bouillon was able to flatter himself, that these arts would leave me in absolute ignorance of the affairs of the protestants, and the dispositions of the seditious, he could not hinder me from perceiving at least some of his own particular sentiments with regard to the prince whom he betrayed.

I could

I could no otherwise answer a discourse so full of artifice, than by confining myself to plain and simple truths, which is the most effectual way to disconcert these so curiously-disguised politicians. I assured him, in few words, that the king was not, nor never would be, changed with regard to the protestants; that he was willing to grant them all the advantages they could reasonably demand, but that the present situation of his affairs would oblige him to defer some time longer those testimonies of his friendship: that his majesty had not forgot any of those causes which Spain had given him to hate her; and that he would always preserve a lively resentment of them, even if he were not to enter into the common concern of Europe, to put a stop to the design of the house of Austria for universal monarchy; but that, in order to secure success, it was necessary that all should be quiet within his kingdom, since it might be expected that Spain would defend herself in a different manner, when she saw herself directly attacked, than she had done in a war, wherein she had only engaged as an auxiliary.

I told the duke de Bouillon, that I readily believed all he had said to me with regard to himself, since he must be sensible that the principles of honour, justice, and gratitude, pointed out to him too plainly the conduct he ought to observe with the king, to leave him a possibility of mistaking it. He refused me the troops I demanded for Henry, nor would he permit me even to peruse madam De Bouillon's last will; saying, that she had sealed it in a casket, and exacted a promise from him, that he would not open it but with the usual forms of law, if any one should question the validity of it; and that she had afterwards obliged him to confirm this promise with an oath. It was not difficult for me to comprehend that any remonstrances from me would be useless; therefore, my commission being now completed, I resolved to return immediately to Laon.

I was

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I was greatly surprised, on my arrival at the camp, to meet the king, who was going to hunt, passing so near the walls of the city that he was within musquet-shot of it: but I was soon informed that both sides had lain down their arms, the city having capitulated upon condition to surrender in ten days, if within that time they were not assisted by an army, or at least if a reinforcement of eight or nine hundred men were not thrown into the place. Henry made me keep close beside him during the chase, that he might hear all the particulars of my journey. When I told him that the duke of Bouillon refused to shew me the will of the deceased dutchess, he replied, that he knew from thence what he ought to think of the donation *. He entertained the same opinion of the duke of Bouillon as I did, who offers," said he, "to be

* In order to destroy the suspicions which the whole of this account might raise as to the reality of that donation of the dutchess of Bouillon, I will give you what the duke de Bouillon's biographer says on this head. "By her last will," says he, "she appointed the duke de Bouillon, her husband, her universal heir. It was currently reported that, notwithstanding this last will of the dutchess, the succession would be contested with her husband: the truth is, Charles de la Mark, the count de Maulevrier, uncle to Charlotte de la Mark, alledged that this succession belonged to him, and that she could not dispose of it, in favour of her husband, to his prejudice. The duke de Montpensier pretended likewise, that the sovereignties of Bouillon, Sedan, Jamets, and Raucourt; could not be contested with him; as he had been substituted therein by Robert de la Mark, the last duke of Bouillon. The duke de Bouillon thought it more eligible to accommodate matters with these two claimants, than

"to engage in a law-suit, which would divert him from the execution of his grand designs: the accommodation was concluded; and the sovereign jurisdiction of Bouillon, Sedan, and Raucourt, remained in property to him." Hist. de Henry duc de Bouillon, par Marsollier, tom. II. liv. iv. This historian likewise speaks of the duke de Sully's journey to Sedan, and of the protection which Henry IV. offered the duke de Bouillon on this occasion. But here we cannot but observe, that it would have been much better not to quote, on this subject, Sully's Memoirs, than to disguise their sense, and conceal, as he has done, the objection that arises from the text of these Memoirs: and this so much the rather (it would be to no purpose to dissemble it, after all that has been said of it, and very lately, by Amelot de la Houssaye, in his Memoirs, in the article Bouillon la Mark) so much the rather, I say, as Henry IV. and the duke de Sully, are not the only persons who seem to doubt of the reality of such donation.

"a medi-

“ a mediator in disturbances which he himself has
“ been the author of.” Nor was he less displeased 1594.
at his refusing to send the troops he demanded :
but in the present conjuncture it was necessary that
his majesty should dissemble all these occasions of
discontent with the duke ; and therefore, in pub-
lic, he seemed to be very well satisfied with his
conduct, and determined to maintain him in Sedan.
With respect to the war with Spain, which I was
commissioned to propose to him, he deferred deli-
berating on it to another time, in full council.

The count of Sommerive, Du Bourg, and Jean-
nin, finding it impossible for them to prevent the
insurrection of the citizens and the garrison of Laon,
who were incensed against them as tyrants who had
rendered their domination insupportable, thought
proper to yield before the time prescribed for de-
livering the city to the king. They had no longer
any hopes of assistance, after the misfortune which
happened to a reinforcement the duke of Maienne
endeavoured to throw into the place. This rein-
forcement coming too late near Laon, to have any
hopes of surprising the besiegers, thought it best to
wait for night in the wood, where they kept them-
selves concealed all day. The king hunting in that
part of the forest at the same time, his dogs disco-
vered the ambuscade. The enemies, although eight
or nine hundred in number, instead of shewing
themselves, or attacking the king, who had only
three hundred horse with him, thought they should
be able to avoid an absolute discovery by separat-
ing, the better to conceal themselves : but the dogs
still continued to pursue them, and the king's troop
arriving in the mean time, they were surprised in so
great a disorder, that our footmen and servants on-
ly, without any assistance from the three hundred
horsemen, made themselves masters of them, and
pillaged them entirely.

After the surrender of Laon, the king judged it
necessary to take a journey to the frontiers of Flan-
ders ;

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ders; his chief inducement to it being the hopes that many of these cities would surrender to him at his approach. The event did not answer his expectations; and his majesty drew no other advantage from his journey, than confirming in their allegiance Amiens, Abbeville, Montreuil, Peronne, and several other cities, into each of which he made a solemn entry. I can say no more of the transactions here, the king's service calling me at that time to Paris upon affairs of less importance than the former, and which for that reason I shall not enter into a particular detail of, any more than of what passed in the different provinces of the kingdom. The reduction of Morlais, and Quimper, by marshal *D'Aumont, with the assistance of the English forces; the building of Fort Du Croisic, by the duke of Mercœur, at the head of his Spaniards, to be a check upon Brest, were the most considerable exploits of the two parties in Brittany. Savoy, Piedmont, Provence, and Dauphiné, continued to be the theatre of a war always favourable to Lefdiguieres, against the duke of Savoy, notwithstanding the defeat and taking † of Crequy.

The duke of Maienne, seeing Laon taken, almost all Picardy in the king's party, the chief officers of the league, and the duke of Guise himself, disposed to treat soon of an accommodation with his majesty, yielded at last to the advice of the president Jean-

* He was killed the following year when besieging Comper, by a cannon-ball that broke his arm to shatters; being upwards of seventy years of age: he said no more when he found himself wounded, than these words, *I have got it.* He was generally esteemed, and generally regretted. See his eulogy and great qualities in M. De Thou, b. cxlii.

† See these military expeditions in the historians.

‡ Charles de Crequy, son-in-law to Lefdiguieres, coming to the re-

lief of Aiguebelle, besieged by the duke of Savoy, was defeated and taken prisoner. This did not happen till 1598.

|| I know not if the author does not here a little too lightly tax this president: at least it has been said that more than two years before, at his return from Spain, he had been the first to advise the duke de Maienne to come to an agreement with the king; as being disgusted at the haughtiness and excessive vanity with which the king of Spain,

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one particular province, and there make powerful efforts in time, to render himself independent; so that, after fortune had subjected all to the king, which he doubted not would soon happen, he might at least have a secure retreat to shelter him in the reverse of his.

Burgundy was the province * fixed upon by the duke of Maienne; and he marched thither with his forces, after placing good garrisons in Dourlens, La-Fere, and Soissons. Besides his being already in possession of great part of this province, its contiguity to Savoy, Franche Comté, Lorrain, Switzerland, and Germany, from whence he hoped to draw great supplies, was a farther inducement for him to fix there. The pope, and the emperor, seemed to enter into his views: he might strengthen his right of conquest, by a resignation in form, which Spain would grant him so much the more willingly, as by that means she would revive a claim upon Burgundy, long since suppressed, but never wholly renounced. All these probable advantages made it be believed by many persons, that the ancient kingdom of Burgundy was upon the point of being restored. The duke of Maienne's conduct in these quarters, the remaining part of this year, and till the month of April in the following, supported this opinion; and I had less reason than any other to doubt of his intention in this respect, after the letters I saw at Paris, in the hands of the cardinal of Bourbon.

But, unfortunately for the duke of Maienne, the Burgundians were not disposed to make choice of a subject for their master: they never before gave such convincing proofs of their fidelity to their sovereign. The duke of Guise beginning with endeavours to secure Beaune, by throwing a strong

in treating with him, had said, *my town of Paris, my town of Orleans,* as if France had actually been his own.

* The duke of Maienne was governor of this province.

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garrison into it, the burghers rose against them, defeated them, and forced them to shut themselves up in the castle : and, as they might still suffer great inconveniences from them, they fortified themselves with barricadoes against the castle, and invited marchal Biron to come to their assistance, permitting him to lodge his little army six weeks within their walls. They afterwards attacked the castle in form, with a battery of twelve pieces of cannon ; and carried on their works so vigorously, that they drove out at last the garrison of the league. I shall give an account hereafter of the expeditions in Burgundy ; at present I must leave them, to return to the affairs of the capital.

I perceived the cardinal's illness to increase so much every day, that, not doubting but his end was very near, I staid at Paris to give the king immediate notice of it. He died without making that disposition of his benefices * which he seemed to have so ardently desired. His majesty was afflicted at his death, having lost a good kinsman and an affectionate subject. He wrote to me, that he was tired with the importunity of several persons who coveted the cardinal's spoils ; and that, to get rid of them, his general answer was, that they were already disposed of. His designs with regard to these benefices were as follows : In the agreement with the abbot de Tiron, certain abbeys belonging to the chancellor and the governor of Pont-de l'Arche were yielded to him, for which those two gentlemen demanded to be largely indemnified out of the benefices of the deceased cardinal. The king was desirous that the abbé de Tiron should release these abbeys to the proprietors, and receive in exchange for them the archbishopric of Rouen, va-

* He was archbishop of Roten, abbé of St. Denis, of St. Germain-des-Pres, of St. Ouen and St. Catherine of Rouen, of Orcamp, &c. De Thou represents him as a prince

who loved the sciences ; he was eloquent, mild, and of an agreeable disposition, but extremely weak. He died on the 28th of July.

lued at thirty thousand livres a year, but charged ^{1594.} by the king with the payment of a pension of four thousand crowns, which he had promised to the chevalier D'Oise*, retaining for himself Gaillon-house, which he designed to purchase from the abbé; and ordered me to prevail upon him to accept of this equivalent. As for the abbey of St. Ouen, one of the finest benefices the deceased cardinal had possessed, the king, as yet, had not bestowed it on any one; and he had the goodness to tell me, that he would not do it without charging it with a pension of ten thousand livres for me.

The greatest difficulty I met with in managing the king's affairs at Paris, was to communicate his prudent œconomy to the directors of his finances, the superintendant especially. The abuse of suffering the finances to become a prey to favourites (an evil, the source of which may be traced back to the reign of Charles VIII.) had in this last reign increased to such a degree, that had a man of the greatest industry, prudence, and integrity imaginable, been at the head of the finances, he perhaps would not have been able to prevent the bad consequences of so prodigious a dissipation: and, unhappily, D'O † possessed none of these qualities. His disposition, naturally leaning towards profusion, indolence, and voluptuousness, had been wholly ruined by all those vices for which the court of Henry III. was famous, deep play, unbounded debauchery, expensive follies, domestic disorders, and extravagances of every kind. D'O was on a footing with Bellegarde ‡, Souvrai, Villequier, Quélus,

* George De Brancas Villars, brother to admiral De Villars.

† Francis D'O, lord of Fresnes, Maillebois, &c. first gentleman of the bed-chamber, governor of Paris and the isle of France, superintendant of the finances, &c. "He surpassed kings and princes in extravagance and prodigality; for, even to his suppers, he had pies

"made of musk and amber served up, that amounted to twenty-five crowns." *Journal de L'Etoile*, Ann. 1594. p. 37.

‡ Roger de St. Larry de Bellegarde, Gilles de Souvrai, René de Villequier, Jacques Levis de Caylus or Quélus, Francis D'Epinaï de St. Luc, Francis de Maugiron, Paul Stuart de Caussade sieur de St. Me-

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Saint Luc, Maugiron, Saint-Mégrin, Livarrot, Joyeuse, Epernon, La-Valette, Du-Bouchage, Thermes, and many other less declared favourites: and the title of minion was all the recommendation he had for a post which the most careless princes think fit, for their own interest, to except from those with which they reward such sort of servants.

Such was the man by whom the finances were conducted at a time, when minions and mistresses being excluded from the council, one would have expected they should have been put under other management: and what is still more surprizing, the king, in his most urgent occasions, had not even the privilege of dividing his own revenues with the superintendant. D'O did not scruple to let him lose a city or a governor for the want of a very inconsiderable sum of money, while at the same time he denied none to his own pleasures. Lieramont*, governor of Catelet, applied to me, to solicit the payment of his garrison from D'O: I thought the affair of such importance, that I subdued my reluctance, to ask a favour of him, and acquitted myself of my commission; but with little success. The superintendant, after I had left him, said to messieurs d'Edouville† and de Mouffy, that he had rather see this place in the hands of Spaniards than protestants. Lieramont was of that religion. Mouffy, who was my kinsman, repeating this discourse to me, I declared to the superintendant, that he should be answerable for the place, if

grim, Jean D'Arce de Livarrot, Anne de Joyeuse, John Louis and Bernard de Nogaret, Henry de Joyeuse, count de Bouchage, afterwards a capuchin, John de St. Larry de Thermes, or Augustus baron of Thermes. Tho' Souvrai had been one of Henry III's favourites, he should not be ranked in the number of this prince's minions: he was a man of an acknowledged merit and probity. Henry III.

said, that if he were neither king nor prince, he would gladly be Souvrai. He refused the commission with which Henry III. would have charged him, to assassinate the marshal de Montmorency, when in prison. De Thou, b. lxi.

* Francis de Dampierre, sieur de Lieramont or Liermont.

† sieur d'Edouville, Boutillier, sieur de Mouffy.

it were lost for want of this payment: But this menace had little effect on him. 1594.

Fortunately for the king, a retention of urine delivered him, a few days after, from so bad a subject. And it is worthy of observation, that this man, who was possessed of more than four millions, or rather of all the money in the kingdom, which he disposed of almost absolutely; more splendid in his equipages, his furniture, and his table, than the king himself, was not yet abandoned by his physicians, when his relations, who had always seemed to bear him great affection, his domestics*, and some others, under the title of creditors, pillaged him with such eagerness, and so completely, that a long time before he expired there was nothing left but bare walls in the chamber where he lay; as if fortune thought fit to finish with him at least by an act of justice†.

The king returned to Paris to treat of a truce, which the duke of Lorraine requested instantly; and of an accommodation with the duke of Guise, who

* He had no children by Charlotte Catherine de Villequier, his wife. "Henry IV. playing at tennis with M. D'O, made him observe that the marker stole their balls, and afterwards called to him with a loud Voice, "D'O, you see that all the world cheats us." Le-Grain, b. vii.

† "If," says M. de Grillon, each must give in his accounts above, I believe that poor D'O will find himself much at a loss to find good documents for his. It was said that he died very much in debt, more than he was worth; and that there were five and twenty or thirty officers in his house when he died. The treasurers regretted him extremely, and called him their father: it was even said, that three of them gave each fifty crowns to Collo to encourage him to dress

him properly. M. leGrand, his good friend, was almost distracted for his loss; for he allowed him every year one hundred thousand franks to spend. Madame was not at all sorry for it, because he almost starved her: those of the religion regretted him as little, for he wished them no good. Madam de Liancourt mourned for him, because she could do with him as she pleased; and if he kept her in favour with the king — M. Segurier, the deari, who assisted him to the last, as likewise did his brothers, repeated to him, as he was dying, *Have mercy on me, O God.* Some of the last words he spoke were, Remember me to his majesty; he will know better, after my death, wherein I have been of service to him, than he did while I lived." L'Etoile, *ibid.*

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solicited it by the duchess * of Guise, his mother, the king's cousin-german, and mademoiselle De Guise, his sister. It must be confessed, that of all those persons who had been in arms against the king, the duke of Guise deserved most indulgence. To the common motives of religion and independence, which seemed to authorise all things, he joined that of a father assassinated by the command of the present king's predecessor. It was madam De Guise, his mother, whose persuasions chiefly induced him to take this step: she was continually representing to her son, that the revolt of the princes and nobility of the kingdom, which in the beginning was justified by religion, became criminal after Henry had removed the only obstacle that could hinder him from enjoying his right of inheritance to the crown.

In any other age, which had not, like this, lost every distinction between virtue and vice, this woman would have been the ornament of her sex, for the qualities of her heart and mind. Her whole conduct was regulated by a native rectitude of soul; so that it was easy to see that she had not even the idea of evil, either to act, or to advise it: and at the same time of so sweet a disposition, that she never was subjected to the smallest emotion of hatred, malignity, envy, or even ill humour. No woman ever possessed so many graces of conversation, or added to a wit so subtil and refined, a simplicity so artless and agreeable. Her repartees were full of salt and sprightliness; and the pleasing, as well as greater qualities, so happily blended in her composition, that she was, at once, tender and lively, tranquil and gay. It was not long before the king became perfectly well acquainted with the character of this lady; and from that moment he not only forgot all his resentment, but also behaved towards

* Catherine of Cleves, wife to at Blois. Charles of Lorraine, duke the duke of Guise who was killed of Guise.

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her with all the familiarity and frankness of a sincere friend. He consented to give the necessary passports to the sieurs De la Rochette, Perigord, and Bigot, whom the duke of Guise sent to propose his demands; and, wholly subdued by the instances of these two ladies, named, on his side, three agents to treat with the duke: these were the chancellor De Chavigny, the duke de Retz, and Beaulieu-Rusé, secretary of state.

These three persons, to shew their great skill in negotiating, began at first by using all those turns and artifices which policy has unseasonably introduced in the place of that frank and open conduct; that without deceiving any one, produces the same effect. Their conferences lasted ten days successively; yet at the end of this time the smallest preliminary was not settled. Madam de Guise, who was tortured by these affected delays, came one day into the king's apartment, when his majesty did me the honour to converse with me, holding my hand; and turning the discourse upon the treaty with her son, she complained to the king, with her usual gracefulness, but mingled with a little impatience; that he had employed three men, "who go," said she, "three different roads to reach no end; the first, by never saying more than these words, *We must consider; We must advise; Let us do better*: the second, by not understanding himself, although he speaks continually: and the third, by never ceasing to find fault." This was, in reality, the true character of the three negotiators. This lady, suffering herself to be wholly transported by her zeal for the king, and tenderness for her son, taking his majesty's hand, which she kissed, notwithstanding Henry's endeavours to the contrary, she conjured him to receive the returning allegiance of the duke of Guise, and give her the consolation to see her family restored to the favour of their king. She spoke with an effusion of heart so strong and lively, that the king, affected by it even

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The duke of Guise had begun with very extravagant propositions, which if he had insisted upon, would have rendered his treaty ineffectual. Doubtless, he was induced to make them, through his knowledge of those persons to whom he was referred: he thought, that to obtain something he must demand a great deal. He claimed no less than the post of high steward of the king's household, which the count of Soissons had been in possession of ever since the assassination of the duke of Guise, when it was bestowed upon him; to possess the government of Champagne, which had likewise been given to the duke of Nevers; to enjoy also the benefices of his uncle, the cardinal of Guise,

* See M. De Thou, b. cxi. who gives himself some share in this accommodation with the duke of Guise. † Philip Hurault de Chiverny, chancellor of France, died in 1599, aged 72.

particularly the archbishopric of Rheims, then actually possessed by M. Du-Bec, a relation of Madam De Liancourt, the king's mistress. He added several other articles; but these three gave rise to the greatest difficulties. The duke of Guise, being informed of the change of the commissioners, resolved immediately to lessen the extravagance of his demands; and wrote to the duchess, his mother, and to his agents, to conclude a treaty with me upon reasonable conditions, and even at any price whatever. He had soon after a new inducement to finish the treaty, as soon as possible, which I was ignorant of: he had discovered that the city of Rheims (the most considerable present he had to offer the king) designing to make a merit of returning to its obedience voluntarily, had solicited the rest of the province to do the like; and had already drawn great part of it into their views. The duke of Guise, to prevent this inconvenience, having attempted to place a garrison there, the inhabitants declared that they would guard the city themselves; and this refusal causing a debate, they answered the duke's menaces by others no less haughty.

After the second conference I had with the duke's agent, there was no mention either of the post of high steward of the household, the government of Champagne, or of the benefices; and those three obstacles being removed, I saw very little difficulty remaining. I proposed to the king, the drawing the duke of Guise from Champagne, to fix him in Provence, by giving him that government for a recompence; so that, his interest there being united with that of Lesdiguières, and Ornano, who supported the king's party against the duke of Epernon, they might at once join to reduce the power of that formidable subject. The king consented to this so much the more willingly, as by the manner in which the family of Guise acted with him, he judged he might depend upon their fidelity; and

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he ordered me to conclude with him upon this plan. I made the proposal to the duke's agents, and, upon reiterated commands from his majesty, used so much diligence in settling all other matters, that the next evening the treaty with the duke of Guise was concluded and signed by me for the king, and by madam de Guise, and the duke's three commissioners, for him.

The next day six deputies from the city of Rheims arrived at Paris; and, addressing themselves to me, told me that the king needed not bestow any great rewards upon the duke of Guise, not only because Rheims was no longer in his power, but because the inhabitants were ready to deliver him up to the king. They did not require to be introduced to his majesty, but said that they would be satisfied with his approbation in writing, or only mine; submitting it to the king to grant them what recompence he should think fit: and ended with offering me, according to custom, a present of ten thousand crowns, which I neither could, nor would accept of. I thanked them, in the king's name, for their good-will; and assured them that he would, with great pleasure, receive this testimony of it. I deferred giving them an answer, till I had received orders from his majesty, to whom I went immediately to relate all that had passed. The king was at that time in his closet, from whence he made every one but Beringhen depart, and listened to me walking, often shaking his head, and smiling, through a reflection on the natural levity and inconsistency of the people. He afterwards took me aside to the window, and desired me to tell him what terms I was upon with the duke of Guise. As soon as I had informed him that the treaty was concluded, he did not hesitate a moment whether or not he should observe it; but he would not, however, appear insensible of the affection of the city of Rheims. I introduced the deputies to him, whom he thanked as became a king, bestowing
upon

upon them a very considerable reward, with an air so gracious, that they returned full of joy and admiration. 1594.

The treaty with the duke of Guise being with the usual form signed by * Gêvres for the king, the duchess and mademoiselle de Guise demanded his majesty's permission for the duke to come himself, and assure him of his obedience. I wrote to him to seek for no other security than that permission: and he made no scruple to comply with my injunctions. He assembled as many of his friends as he could, and came and threw himself at the king's feet, with so many marks of a sincere repentance, that the king, who penetrated into his inmost soul, instead of reproaches, or a silence which on such occasions is more terrible than the severest reproaches, made use of all his endeavours to reassure him: he embraced him three several times, honoured him with the name of nephew, treated him with the greatest tenderness and freedom, and without affecting either to avoid or recal what had passed, mentioned the deceased duke of Guise with honour. He said that they had been friends in their youth, although often rivals for the same ladies; and that the duke's good qualities, and a conformity of disposition, had united them in a fixed aversion to the duke of Alençon. A friend, who endeavours to reconcile himself to his friend after a slight quarrel, could not have behaved otherwise; and all those that were witnesses of this reception, could never sufficiently admire a king, who, with so many qualities to inspire fear, employed only those that created love.

The duke of Guise, absolutely gained by this discourse, replied to the king, that he would neglect nothing to render himself worthy of the honour his majesty did the memory of his father, and

* Lewis Potier de Gêvres, secretary of state. From him is descended the branch of the Gêvres; and

from Nicolas Potier de Blancmenil his elder brother, that of Novion.

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the sentiments he was pleased to entertain of himself: and from that time he took such care to convince him that his respect and fidelity to him would continue inviolable, that the king, forgetting all which any other, in his situation, would have apprehended from the raising again a family which had made kings tremble, lived with him familiarly, and admitted him with the other courtiers into all his parties of pleasure: for such was the character of Henry, that that exterior gravity, which the royal dignity makes it necessary to assume, never hindered him from resigning himself up freely to pleasures which an equality of conditions spreads over society. The truly great man knows how to be by turns, and as occasions require, whatever he ought to be, master, or equal, king, or citizen: it is no diminution of his greatness, to unbend himself in private, provided that he shews himself, in his public character, capable of performing all the duties of his high station: the courtier will never forget that he is with his master.

Madam de Guise entering the king's apartment some days after, when the duke of Guise presented the napkin to his majesty for a light repast which he made in the afternoon, she again took occasion to express her gratitude to him for his goodness to her son, and told him, with a lively emotion, that if ever the duke of Guise was deficient in his duty and obedience, she would disinherit him, and disown him for her son. The king, running to embrace her, assured her that he, on his side, would ever preserve for the duke, and his whole family, the tenderness of a father.

The treaty I had just concluded with the duke of Guise did not fail to be loudly exclaimed against. His own particular enemies, and that sort of people which swarm about a court, who have no other business than to decry the conduct of persons in place, united themselves against me, and being secretly supported by those from whom the cognizance of
this

this affair was taken, proclaimed every where, that I undertook this commission only to please madam de Guise. The duke of Epemon was not silent on this occasion; and whenever the duke of Guise and he were mentioned together, he constantly said, that I had offended the one without cause, to oblige the other against all reason. These discourses were so often repeated to the king, that he was at last made to believe, I had acted with rather too much precipitation: however, he was not displeased with me upon that account.

It was not difficult for me to justify myself; which I did by an apology in writing, and presented it to the king. I there defended my conduct with the following reasons: That the king could not possibly grant the three articles before mentioned, without giving disgust to a great many other persons; notwithstanding which, he would have been obliged to grant them, if he had not had a government to bestow upon the duke, which was the least recompence he could expect, after resigning Champagne, and yielding up so many other claims: that with regard to the government which was given him, no other could be chosen, from whence fewer bad consequences might be feared, than from Provence*. For upon a supposition that the duke of Guise might hereafter become capable of forgetting the new oath of allegiance he had taken, there was little danger to be apprehended from him in a province which had no communication with Lorrain, the Low Countries, and Burgundy especially: on the contrary, although none of the duke's demands had been complied with, except the continuing him in the government of Champagne, yet by that, the danger of perpetuating the war in those countries was incurred: That it was the king's interest to reserve

* The government was afterwards taken from him by cardinal Richelieu; who likewise took that of Picardy from the duke d'Elbeuf, and that of Burgundy from the duke de Bellegarde.

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to himself the power of bestowing the government of Champaigne upon a man who should be not only sincerely attached to his service, but whose integrity likewise should be so well known, that the rebels in Burgundy might despair of ever bringing him to favour their views. With regard to the conveniency of fixing upon Provence for the duke of Guise, I added that argument relating to the duke of Epernon, which I have already touched upon. I recalled to the king's remembrance, in a few words, the many occasions of complaint this man had given him, his repeated revolts, his intrigues to disengage all the catholics from his majesty's party, his insolent boast that he would never acknowledge any superior in his government, his last proceedings at Villemur, and many other circumstances which certainly would do no honour to the history of this imperious subject. It was opposing one leader of the league by another, whom a thousand motives, besides that of his own interest, which ought always to be regarded as the most powerful, concurred to regulate his conduct by a system quite contrary to his former views.

Without dwelling upon the orders his majesty had given me with regard to the duke of Guise, nor the danger of a longer delay; although the treaty with him had not been so advantageous as it was easy to prove it was, I represented to the king, that he could not act rigorously towards a man, who had so steadily refused all the offers and most flattering promises from Spain, the dukes of Savoy, and Lorraine, and the other enemies of the state*, to prevail upon him to continue a war, which, however short a time it had lasted, would have been a greater inconvenience to him, than all he had granted to the duke of Guise. Nor ought it to be thought a matter of little consequence

* The duke of Guise was hated by the league, especially since the time he had killed with his own hand, in a tumult, the sieur de St. Paul, his field lieutenant, who was much beloved by them.

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(whatever his and my enemies could say) to gain over a man whose name and birth would always procure him a powerful party. I agree with them, if they please, that this lord made after all but an inconsiderable sacrifice of unjust claims, and uncertain expectations; nay I will reduce it lower, and ascribe it all to the king's generosity; yet, if by that means he bound to his interest, not a single man only, but a family respectable for their alliances, their riches, and influence, it cannot be called an useless generosity.

The king was struck with these reasons, and seemed greatly surprised at my exact knowledge of Epernon. He did not think it proper to permit this writing to be published, because of the truths it contained, which it was not yet time to reveal. I submitted, without any difficulty, for I never gave myself much trouble about the efforts of envy, having always looked upon that passion as an incurable disease. The duke of Guise's whole conduct for the future made a still better apology for me: he began his government by so clear and absolute a declaration of his sentiments, that the seditious were deprived of all hopes of ever being able to seduce him. In all occasions wherein the king's service, or the good of the state, required his assistance, he behaved with equal firmness and prudence. The reduction * of Marseilles, which was with

* This town was upon the point of being delivered up to the king of Spain, by two of its burgeses, named Charles Casault, and Lewis D'Aix; when the duke of Guise found means to make himself master of it, by intelligence held with Peter and Bartholomew Libertat, two brothers, who were also burgeses of the same town. They flew Casault, beat the troops of the Spanish side, and let in, through the Porte-reale, the duke of Guise, who performed this enterprize with a great deal of conduct. See De

Thou, b. cxvi. D'Aubigné, tom. III. liv. iv. chap. 12. Henry IV. upon receiving the news of the reduction of Marseilles, said, "It is now that I am king." In the following campaign, the duke of Guise shewed a great deal of valour, in pursuing the Spaniards as far as Gray; and killed with his own hand, a trooper belonging to the enemy, who had given him defiance. Henry IV. embracing him, spoke these words, "Those who find old examples of virtue before them, must imitate and

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reason thought one of the best strokes of that kind, was his work; and with the help of Lesdiguières, and the countess of Sault, he so well humbled the haughty Epèrnon, that he at last obliged him to restrain his rebellious disposition; and this proud subject was seen to submit to the king's mercy, and became one of his most assiduous courtiers.

I never was unwilling to do justice to the duke of Epèrnon, to be among the first to enhance the value either of his personal services, or those of his soldiers at Limoges, Saint-Germain, Ville-bois*, Chartres, Boulogne, Montauron, Antibes, and even at Villemur. I am sorry that the subject I treat on necessarily engages me in a discussion which may lessen the advantageous opinions that have been conceived of him; but since this is a place where nothing should be concealed or disguised, what can, what ought to be thought of his conduct in Provence? Certainly, to ascribe it all to a bigotry in his religion, is shewing the utmost favour to his reputation. His panegyrists, who so loudly extol his most inconsiderable actions, ought to be a little more moderate when they reflect on his frequent revolts, and acts of disobedience; or begin by establishing it for a truth, that a subject may be irreproachable, yet fail in his duty to his king and his country, introduce discord and confusion to gratify his ambition, and give to violence the name of right. If any panegyrics are to be bestowed here, doubtless it is the king who merits them, who, after all these offences, received Epèrnon with open arms, and never excluded him from favours;

* repeat them, for such as come "after." P. Matthieu, tom. II. liv. i. p. 192.

* See on each of these actions, L'hist. de la vie d'duc d'Epèrnon, printed at Paris, Ann. 1655. Villebois is a town of Angoumois, which at this day is called La Vallette. You may likewise consult the same history, as to the re-

proaches which our Memoirs give this duke: but he cannot be justified in every particular; and even his own historian looks upon it as impossible. All that can be said is, that M. de Sully took pleasure to aggravate faults, which the last years of the duke d'Epèrnon's life have almost entirely effaced.

which

which in every respect, considering his behaviour, were indeed mere favours to him. 1594.

After the death of D'O, there appeared among the candidates a man, who, it was immediately thought, would have the post of superintendant; this was Nicolas de Sancy*, who wanted neither capacity, nor experience, for that station. Sancy might be very properly called a man of wit, using this term in the sense that is generally given it, to denote vivacity, subtilty, and quickness of apprehension. But, as it is very seldom found, that an excellent judgment is joined to these qualities, Sancy spoiled them all by a degree of vanity, caprice, and impetuosity, which sometimes rendered him insupportable. It is my opinion of these strong and lively imaginations in general, that although they are commonly subject to two great faults, which are too much subtilty, and too little clearness in their ideas, and confusion and unsteadiness in their schemes, yet they ought not to be thought wholly incapable of business; because it often happens, that they hit upon expedients which would have escaped more cautious and phlegmatic minds: but there is almost always occasion to watch over them, and to correct their errors.

Sancy had long and usefully served Henry the third, and the reigning king, both in Germany and Switzerland. He had insinuated himself into Henry's favour by great complaisance, a subtle behaviour, a refined art in heightening his pleasure, and by becoming necessary in his affairs of gallantry. Hence it was that he lived with his prince upon terms of the greatest familiarity. That he might neglect nothing by which he thought he should make his court successfully, he inveighed, without ceasing, against the dissipation of the finances; and, as a flatterer generally goes beyond his mark, in railing at the superintendant he could not help decrying likewise the superintendancy, as an em-

* Nicolas de Harlay de Sancy.

1594. ployment ruinous to the state: by which he gave good reason to call his wit in question. But he himself opposed his advancement to this post by an obstacle still greater: he not only neglected to please madam De Liancourt *, then mistress to the king, but also by an intemperance of tongue, to which such persons as he are very subject, he had offended this lady on a very delicate occasion.

I know not whether the story I am going to relate had ever any foundation in truth. However this may be, thus the story ran in Paris: His majesty having sent Alibour, his first physician, to visit madam De Liancourt, who was indisposed (this was in the beginning of his addresses to that lady) at his return he told the king, that she was indeed a little disordered, but that he need not be uneasy, for the consequence would be very good. "But will you not bleed and purge her?" said the king to him. "I shall be very careful how I do that," replied the old man, with the same simplicity, "before she has gone half her time." "How!" interrupted the king, astonished and disordered to the last degree: "what is it you say friend? Surely you rave, and are not in your right senses." Alibour supported his assertion with good proofs, which the king thought he should destroy, by telling him upon what terms he was with the lady. "I know not what you have done, or what you have not done," replied the old physician with great composure, and for a complete proof referred him to four or five months from that time. The king quitted Alibour in great rage, and went immediately to reproach the sick fair one, who, no doubt, knew well enough how to new dress all the good man had ignorantly said; for it was not perceived that any misunderstanding

* This was the fair Gabrielle, who was wife to Nicolas d'Amerval, lord of Liancourt. She was forced by her father, they say, to this marriage, which was not at all to her liking: but Henry IV. knew very well how to hinder the consummation.

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had happened between the king and his mistress. It is certain, however, that the event was exactly conformable to Alibour's prediction: but it was thought that Henry, after a more strict examination, was brought to believe that he had been mistaken in his reckoning, since, instead of disowning the child which madam de Liancourt lay in of at Coucy, during the siege of Laon, he acknowledged it openly, and had it baptised by the name of Cæsar.

Sancy gave free scope to his wit, in relating this story; and did not forget the circumstance of * La-Regnardiere, who, having one day, as he said, taken the liberty to inform his majesty of some things that did not please him, was soon after banished the court, under pretence that he had quarrelled with the admiral †. Sancy found something to say upon the death of the good man Alibour, and would have thought it more natural, if it had not happened before the accomplishment of his prediction. If he commented thus upon the birth of the son, he did no less upon the whole conduct of the mother. Sancy proved, to his cost, what the malice of a woman, especially a king's mistress, is capable of doing: Henry loved him, and wanted to raise him; and although he was inclined to suppress the post of superintendant of the finances, yet he would have preserved it, merely to have bestowed it upon him; but madam De Liancourt knew how to prevent it.

* "La-Regnardiere was a kind of buffoon, half soldier, half lawyer, and half gentleman, who said whatever came uppermost." It is in this manner he is spoken of in the adventures of the baron de Fœnesté, liv. iv. ch. 7. where we find many more stories related of him.

† The Journal de L'Etoile, and the Confession de Sancy, confirm all this pleasantry, as also the sus-

picion of its ending tragically for old M. Alibour, the king's first physician, who was poisoned, they say, by order of the king's mistress: but all this is alledged without any proof. You may also read, on this head, what Sauval has told, on the faith of public report, and satirical libels, touching the intrigues between the fair Gabrielle and the duke de Bellegarde.

1594.

Instead of a superintendant of the finances, his majesty composed a council consisting of eight persons; these were, the chancellor de Chiverny, the duke de Retz, messieurs de Bellièvre (who was succeeded by Matignon) de Schomberg, de Maillé, de Fresne (protected by madam De Liancourt) de La-Grange-le-roi, and de Sancy, who thought himself very happy to be one of the members* of this body. The king judged it necessary to give this council, for form's sake only, and without any distinction, a titular head, which was the duke of Nevers. This form of government of the finances lasted some time, although with a few inconsiderable alterations, which I shall mention in their place: for the reader may expect in these Memoirs to see whatever relates to the finances treated with all that clearness and extent which a man, who has so long made them his study and employment, is capable of giving them.

The king was convinced, in the sequel, that this new change in the council† was far from affording that remedy the disease required: small as my experience was in these affairs, I easily comprehended it. It is not the government of one man only by which the finances are thrown into confusion; since it is an incontestible truth, that, as they must pass through some hands, the fewer that are employed, the less will be embezzled. The abuse lies in the choice of this man, and in the nature of the finances: and therefore, to have this office discharged by many different persons, is to perpetuate the evil. If in the whole kingdom, it

* M. De Thou and Perefice say, that M. de Sully was for some time superintendant before M. de Rosny: which ought not to be understood, in my opinion, but only of the authority which he assumed of himself among his fellow-counselors, as M. de Sully tells us afterwards. The writers of that time agree, that nothing of certainty can

be said as to the state of the council of the finances, till the time in which M. de Rosny was at least declared the chief: We run no risque in believing all he says on the head of the finances.

† Perefice talks of this new form of the council of the finances, as M. de Rosny, *Ann.* 1598. p. 224.

is difficult to find one single man fit for such an employment, how can it be expected that a great number will be met with? Nor is the mistake less palpable in imagining that all these persons bringing each of them one distinguishing good quality into their employments, the same effect will be produced as from a man who unites them all in himself; since that is to suppose, that this single good quality cannot possibly be rendered useless by the opposition of several bad ones, either in himself or his associates. In general, the predominant principle with which those persons who are invested with public employments enter upon the execution of them, is to raise and enrich themselves and their relations. If this eager desire of riches is not felt by them at first, it is inspired, increased, and stimulated, by the great sums of money which pass through their hands: amidst that dependance on, and mutual fear of, each other, every one represents to himself integrity as a quality not only useless, but hurtful to him, the honour of which is shared by his colleagues, the inconvenience wholly his own. The king was far from being fortunate in his choice of the members of this body: several of those who composed it, besides being of a malignant disposition, were in a situation that exposed them to corruption: they had debts to pay, and domestic wants to supply.

His majesty destined me a place in it, and had, for a long time, in his conversations with me, expressed his desire that I would make myself thoroughly acquainted with whatever regarded the finances; but I could not possibly submit to the imperious behaviour of the duke of Nevers, who very unseasonably assumed great consequence to himself from his quality of prince, in a place where it signified very little. One day, when his insolence had exhausted all my patience, I took the liberty to intreat he would remember, that the family of Bethune was in possession of the earldom

1594. of Nevers before the family of Gonzague. A man swollen with the pride of ancestry could not possibly receive a more severe mortification. He often repeated to those who would hear him, that my whole family were huguenots; and, to answer my anecdote with another, said, that he had seen my grandfather make a very mean figure at Nevers. I suffered him to have his revenge, which could extend no farther than keeping me out of a council where I had very little inclination to be with him; and this satisfaction he had. The king, who had many measures to keep, told me, in a very obliging manner, that he was under a necessity of deferring some time longer the proof he intended to give me of his friendship; and I waited for it without murmuring, satisfied with the post of secretary of state, with a salary of two thousand livres a year, and a pension of three thousand six hundred more, which the king bestowed upon me.

Persons of the least discernment being convinced of the necessity there was to introduce a reformation into the finances, the new council were at first desirous of this honour; and a scheme for that purpose was proposed by those amongst them who most valued themselves for their penetration and method. These were Fresne and La-Grange-le-roi. But after they had produced a very large volume upon this affair, it happened with that, as with the most part of systems that have been or may be invented; nothing more easy in speculation, in practice nothing more difficult: and the king, whom they had flattered with mighty hopes, found every thing in the same condition as before, at the end of the year which he had passed at Paris, expecting daily the effect of their promises.

He was retained there to more purpose by the treaty with Lorrain, which, entirely forsaking Spain, concluded a league offensive and defensive with France. Sancy's services were of great use in this treaty; and to him almost all the honour of it was

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was due. The king was no longer at a loss for employment, after the duke of Bouillon arrived at Paris; he came in person to press the execution of those schemes he had entertained me with at Sedan, particularly a declaration of war against Spain, which he made the basis of his advancement in the Low Countries. He used such plausible arguments for it, that, after the example of the courtiers*, he did not scruple to propose it in full council. He found there two different parties who did not approve of this war: those in whom a rooted attachment to Spain and the league still remained, and they were not few in number; and those who thought a war, in the present weak and exhausted state of the kingdom, was very unseasonable. These last had few partisans, but strong reasons on their side, if any one would have listened to them.

I would not incur the reproach of silence upon this occasion. I used every argument my reason could suggest, to dissuade the king from this war; but this prince, whom a natural propensity drew always a little to that side, thought he had now found the opportunity he sought for, to revenge himself upon a neighbour who had made it his endeavour to maintain the flame which consumed the heart of his kingdom. He was sure of troops from Lorraine: England and Holland, by their ambassadors, gave hopes of a powerful diversion; and, according to the duke of Bouillon, a single

* M. de Thou makes no doubt but the duke de Bouillon was the principal author of this war: and his historian entirely agrees, that in giving this counsel he far less consulted the advantage of the state, and the glory of the king, than his own personal interest, and that of the calvinistical party, who necessarily wanted a war, in order to obtain the favourable terms which were granted them by the edict of Nantes. Notwithstanding the reasons for declaring war against Spain,

of which a minute detail may be seen in MSS. de la Bibliot. de Roi. Vol. marked 8955, and in the king's declaration, that is set down in tom. VI. of the Memoirs de la Ligue: all good writers and judicious persons are unanimously of one voice, in favour of the duke de Sully's opinion as to the precipitation and imprudence with which Henry IV. conducted himself in this affair, the consequences of which might have been a good deal more fatal than they were.

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word from him was sufficient to make all Luxembourg surrender: Sancy made great promises in behalf of the Thirteen Cantons: all Franch-Compté lay open to their ravages. The king was determined by all these flattering appearances; and in January, the following year, war was declared in form against Spain.

That kingdom seemed to give herself very little trouble about this proceeding; and answered only by shewing great contempt for Henry's council, and for Henry himself, to whom she gave no other title than that of prince of Bearn. While she made preparations to defend herself, her emissaries in France endeavoured to spare her the trouble, by an attempt so horrid, that it is scarce credible she could have recourse to it.

On the 26th of December, the king being then at Paris, in his apartments in the Louvre*, where he gave orders to messieurs de Ragny† and de Montigny‡, who entered with a great number of other persons; at the very moment when he stooped to embrace one of them, he received a wound in the face with a knife, which the murderer let fall as he was endeavouring to escape through the croud‡. I was present, and approached in an a-

* According to others, in the chamber of the marchioness de Montceaux, at the hotel de Schomberg, behind the Louvre: but, in fact, it was neither at the Louvre, nor at the hotel de Schomberg, that this affair happened. A register belonging to the town-house at Paris, quoted by Piganiolle, tom. II. de la Description de Paris, says, that the fair Gabrielle resided, in 1595, at the hotel D'Estrées; and that it was at this place Henry IV. was wounded. This hotel was afterwards called l'hotel du Bouchage; and was purchased in 1616, by M. de Burelle, in order to lodge and accommodate the fathers of the oratory, who still continue there.

† Francis de la Magdelaine de Ragny.

‡ Francis de La-Grange de Montigny.

‡ "Immediately the king, who found himself wounded, looking round him, and seeing Mathurine, his fool, said, *The deuce take the fool: she has wounded me.* But she, denying it, ran directly to shut the door, whereby she was the occasion of preventing this assassin from making his escape; who, upon being seized and afterwards searched, dropped his knife, which was all over bloody." Thus L'Etoile speaks of it. The MSS. de la Bibl. du Roi say quite otherwise in vol. 9033,

gony of grief, seeing the king all covered with blood, and fearing, with reason, that the stroke was mortal. The king removed our apprehensions by a composed and agreeable behaviour; and we perceived immediately that his lip only was wounded; the stroke having been aimed too high, the force of it was stopped by a tooth, which it broke.

The parricide was discovered, without any difficulty, though he had mixed among the croud. He was a scholar, named John Chatel; and readily answered, when he was interrogated, that he came from the college of the jesuits, accusing those fathers with being the authors of his crime. The king, who heard him, said, with a gaiety which on such an occasion few persons could have been capable of, that he had heard from the mouths of many persons, that the society never loved him, and he was now convinced of it by his own. Chatel was delivered up to Justice*; and the prosecutions against the jesuits, which had been suspended, were now resumed more vigorously than before, and terminated by the banishment of the

namely, "that the king, finding
" himself wounded, spoke thus to
" one of those two gentlemen,
" *Ab, cousin! you have wounded me:*
" and that he thereupon, throw-
" ing himself at his majesty's feet,
" replied, God forbid, sire, that I
" should entertain even a thought
" of hurting or wounding your
" majesty: I have no weapon a-
" bout me but the sword by my
" side." M. De Thou says, that
the count of Soissons seizing the
assassin, spoke aloud to him, that it
was one of them two who had given
the blow; and that the poignard
was perceived to lie at his feet
glittering by the light of the can-
dles. Lib. iii.

* "After having been put to the
" ordinary and extraordinary tryal
" upon the rack, which he en-
" dured without making any con-
" fession, and having made the

" *amende honorable*, his hand was
" cut off, holding in it the murder-
" ous knife with which he intended
" to kill the king; then his flesh was
" torn off with red-hot pincers,
" and he was drawn between four
" horses in the Place de Grève;
" his body and members cast into
" the fire, and burnt to ashes, and
" the ashes thrown into the air.
" The sieur Chatel, the father of the
" parricide, was banished France
" for nine years, and for ever from
" the precincts and jurisdiction of
" Paris, condemned to pay a fine
" of four thousand crowns, his
" house razed, and instead thereof
" a pyramid erected, containing
" the whole story of the fact."
L'Etoile, *ibid*. It is thought that
the little square that lies before the
Barnabites, is the spot on which
Chatel's house stood.

1594. whole order * from the kingdom. Father John Guignard † was hanged for his pernicious doctrines against the authority and life of kings: John Guerret †, Peter Varade, Alexander Mayus, Francis Jacob, and John Le-Bel, other members of the society, suspected of being his accomplices, were obliged to make the *amende honorable*, and condemned to perpetual banishment.

This attempt confirmed the king in his resolution to pursue the war with Spain. He drew a favourable augury for his future success from the advantage he gained in the first acts of hostility. As soon as the treaty between France and Lorraine was concluded, the latter immediately, and without solicitation, dispersed her troops over Burgundy, under the conduct of Tremblecourt ¶ and Saint George, and carried terror into every part of that province. On the other side, the garrison of Soissons, a place absolutely devoted to the league commanded by Conan and § Bellefond, was almost wholly cut off by Mouffy ¶, D'Edouville, De Bays, and Gadancourt the lieutenant of my com-

* "The jesuits, in obedience to the arret against them, departed Paris, conducted by a serjeant of the court: they were thirty-seven in number, part of whom were put into three carts, and the rest travelled on foot; their procurator being mounted on a little nag," &c. L'Etoile, *ibid.*

† He would not make the *amende honorable* to the king, alledging that he had not offended him. Cayet, *ibid.*

‡ Here the author is mistaken. John Guerret was, by an express arret, condemned to perpetual banishment; but there is no express mention made of Peter Varade, Alexander Mayus, &c. who were comprised with all the rest, and without being particularly named in the arret, which proscribed in

general the whole society. It is a glaring calumny in Morisot, to have advanced, chap. 33. that Francis Jacob, to whom they had told that Henry IV. was just assassinated by Chatel, boasted that he would have dispatched this prince, if he had not been prevented by Chatel. I know of no historian who has said any such thing.

¶ — D'Auffonville, sieur de St. George, and Lewis de Beauvau, sieur de Tremble-court, both gentlemen of Lorraine,

§ Bernardine Gigault de Bellefende.

¶ On the 25th of February, in the plains de Villers Coterets in Vallois. The baron de Conan is called Conas or Conac, in M. De Thou: and instead of Bays, you must read it Heyne.

pany. The duke of Montmorency*, to prove himself worthy of the dignity of constable, which he had lately been invested with, fell upon Dauphiny, the Lionnois, and Bresse, with a body of four thousand foot, and four hundred well disciplined horse; drove out from those places the remainder of the troops belonging to the dukes of Savoy, and Nemours, took Vienne by composition from Dizimieux, who was governor of it for the duke of Nemours, and afterwards Montluel. Marechal Biron, after the expedition at Beaune, made himself master of Nuys, Autun, and Dijon†. The duke of Bouillon, as soon as war was proclaimed, entered Luxembourg, where, with the assistance of count Philip of Nassau, he defeated eight or ten parties of horse, under the command of Mansfield.

Henry did not doubt but that, by uniting all these separate bodies into one army, he should make whatever province he conducted it into tremble. It is certain that if he did this, he could not make a stand every where as before; but the expectations his majesty formed from his first project, made him resolve to prefer it. Having the choice of entering Picardy, Champagne, or Burgundy, he determined upon the last, where messieurs de Montmorency, Biron, and Sancy, gave him hopes of great success. Their secret motives for calling him thither were these.

The constable Montmorency had been alarmed by the great preparations he saw made by Spain in Lombardy, where the constable of Castile had orders to quit the Milanese, however necessary his presence might be in that country, to enter France, and make some bold attempt there, after he should be joined by the count de Fuentes, general of the

* Henry the second son of the constable Anne de Montmorency, who was made constable in the year 1593.

† See all these different expeditions into Burgundy, in De Thou and D'Aubigné, Ann. 1595.

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Spanish troops in the Netherlands. Montmorency therefore apprehended that all these troops would fall upon him. Marechal Biron, who was in the same quarters, where, after seizing the city of Dijon, he had attacked the castle of it, and that of Talan, both of great strength, was afraid, likewise, that he should be obliged to raise the siege if he was not assisted.

As to Sancy, his views were to advance his own reputation by the conquest of Franche-Comté, to which he was incessantly endeavouring to persuade the king. Convinced by his own experience of madam de Liancourt's power, he sought to make her approve this project: but the terms he was upon with this lady not permitting him to propose it to her himself, he concealed his own interest in the affair, and made use of the interposition of others. He caused it to be hinted to the chancellor de Chiverny, and, by his means, to a lady who could not fail of making her court by it to madam de Liancourt, that the king might easily provide a noble inheritance for her son Cæsar, by driving out the Spaniards from Franche-Comté, and giving him the possession of it under the sovereignty of the Thirteen Cantons, who would be induced by their own interest to favour the attempt.

Madam de Liancourt, I am persuaded, could not flatter herself with the hope of gaining the king's consent to so ridiculous a scheme; and durst not even communicate it to him, though this prince's passion * for her was so great, that he suffered no one to be ignorant of it: but there needed no more to make him resolve upon a journey to Burgundy, than this lady's joining herself to those who advised him to it. Such is a court,

I " He went through Paris, having this lady by his side; he took her with him to hunt, and caressed her before all the world." Journ. de L'Etoile,

ibid. And we may judge of the attachment of Henry IV. to this lady, from the letters he writ to her: which see in the collection newly printed.

and

and thus are kings imposed upon: from whence they may learn; that, whatever ideas they may have conceived of the wisdom and abilities of their ministers, to judge truly of every transaction it is the surest way to study carefully the secret inclinations, interest, and dispositions of those who are nearest to their persons. 1594.

To remedy, in some measure, the inconveniences which might arise from leaving the frontiers of Picardy exposed to the inroads of the Spanish troops that were in Flanders, the king, who was not, like others, imposed upon by the great promises that England and Holland made him, left messieurs De Nevers, De Bouillon, De Villars, and De Saint Paul *, upon this frontier, with each a detachment under their command; enjoining them to assist each other upon occasion, and above all recommending a good intelligence amongst themselves. In case of a re-union, the duke of Nevers was appointed to command in chief. He provided with the same wisdom and foresight for the affairs at home, by establishing a council, which, besides the finances, was to take cognizance of all the treaties that were made with the provinces, cities, and governors; of all affairs relating to war; and of the administration of justice throughout the kingdom.

As soon as his majesty had publicly explained himself with regard to the forming this council, the count of Soissons wished to be made president of it; and began to insinuate something to that purpose in the king's presence. That I might remove his resentment against me for traversing his marriage, I solicited this title for him, which was more honourable than effective, and in all appearance would be of short duration: but the king, whose aversion for the count increased every day, had already fixed upon the prince of Conti, and

* Francis d'Orleans, count de St. Paul, governor of Provence.

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at dinner declared his purpose before the whole court. Then turning to the count of Soissons, he told him, that, knowing his disposition to be turned wholly towards war, he would keep him about his person this campaign; and ordered him to get his company of gendarmes in readiness to attend him. The prince of Conti answered only with a profound bow, because he expressed himself with difficulty; and the count of Soissons did the same, because anger hindered him from speaking: all his majesty said to him being accompanied with praises of his valour, and an air of distinction which forced him to appear satisfied.

The members of the new council were almost all the same that had composed the former; to which were added three intendants, Heudicourt, Marcel, and Guibert: the number was afterwards augmented to eight, by joining to those three Incarville, Des-Barreaux, Atichy, Santeny, and Vienne, and a secretary named Meillant. Although the duke of Nevers was not now in the council, the king found no less difficulty in procuring me a place in this than in the former. He was afraid to propose it at first, on account of the catholics, who could not suffer a protestant in power: but he broke through this obstacle three days afterwards; and the reason he gave for it to the other counsellors was, that the confidence which the prince of Conti had in me, rendered my association necessary even to themselves.

The road his majesty was to take being through Moret, I attended him so far, not so much to receive him there, since madam de Rosny could have done that without me, as to have an opportunity of conferring privately with this prince, and to receive his last instructions concerning affairs that might in his absence be brought before the council, the members whereof did not long continue in a state of friendship. My colleagues, perceiving by the private dispatches I received from
the

the king, that I was in possession of his confidence, entered, through jealousy, into a combination against me, looking upon me as one who would carry away all the honour of every meritorious act that was performed by the council. They sought to disgust me, or to force me to silence, by joining in a constant opposition to all I said; but, finding that notwithstanding this behaviour I still persisted to take my own measures, they had recourse to another stratagem, and in our assemblies every affair was discussed but what related to the finances, which was referred to private meetings, either at the chancellor's or at Sancy's; and there all was regulated without my participation. I did not dissemble my thoughts of this collusion, but declared to them, that I had no desire to mix in their debates; and, instead of signing their decrees, protested against them, and retired to Moret. The members of the council, who could not even invent any pretence for the disgust they gave me, being afraid of his majesty's reproaches, prevailed upon the prince of Conti himself to intreat me to return. Being always naturally incapable of flattery, or of disguising my sentiments, I replied, that since they did not rectify the abuses which had been introduced into the finances, although they were sufficiently acquainted with them, I would at least avoid the reproach of following their conduct, and would stay at Moret, rather than be a witness of faults which I saw committed with impunity.

The king, whom I informed of what had happened to me, found so much conformity between his situation and mine, that he thought he could not console me more effectually, than by complaining to me in his turn. He had indeed most ungovernable spirits to deal with. The count of Soissons, who had followed him with reluctance, revenged himself by repeated instances of his caprice and ill humour. But not all his endeavours could induce the king, however greatly he was offended, to order

1595. der him to retire; which was the point he wished to bring him to: and he was at last obliged to go of his own accord, upon a pretence so very trifling, that it had scarcely the appearance of one. A report being spread that the constable of Castille was approaching, the king ordered the constable de Montmorency, and marechal Biron, to bring up the two bodies of troops which they commanded: the count of Soissons alledged that, by his post of high steward of the king's household, he had a right to the chief command of these troops in his majesty's absence, and asserted his claim to it in his presence. The king did not think proper even to request a favour of this nature from the constable, and the marechal; and used his utmost endeavours to banish so ridiculous a notion from the count's mind. He solicited, he intreated him, as he would have done his son or brother (these were his majesty's own words) but in vain: the count, who did not err through ignorance, quitted him with a dissembled discontent, and prevailed upon part of the soldiers under his command to do the like. The king immediately dispatched letters to his council, to take proper measures upon the count's flight: the same messenger left one for me as he passed by Moret. Henry did not yet know that I had retired thither; but we had agreed upon this expedient, to conceal from my enemies the correspondence I had with his majesty.

Three or four days after the receipt of this letter, my servants informed me that some soldiers were just arrived, who insisted upon quartering at Saint-Mamert, a village upon the confluence of the Seine and the Loin, dependant upon Moret, and distant from it about a quarter of a league. I sent Camord to bring me intelligence who they were, and what was their design. They not only neglected to send me, by this gentleman, the usual compliments upon these occasions, but likewise answered him insolently, that they had a right to quarter

quarter in any place where their horses began to be fatigued, and all that could be required of them was to do no mischief. They refused to name their captains, and only said that they belonged to the count of Soissons. That I might leave these officers no excuse for their rudeness, I wrote to them a second time, telling them that, since they belonged to the count of Soissons, who honoured me with his friendship, they were welcome to quarter at Moret; that I would provide them lodgings in the inns and houses of the town's people, where they would have greater conveniency; and just hinted to them that I was sensible of the manner in which they had received my deputy. Camord, whom I would have sent with this second message, told me, that it would have no other effect than to encrease the insolence of these officers, who came with a premeditated design to affront me; which he confirmed by several other circumstances of his reception, that he had concealed from me before, to avoid a greater misfortune. Madam De Rosny, who was present at this relation, began to give way to female fears, and accusing Camord with imprudence, said she had rather that the whole village of Saint-Mamert was laid in ruins, than see me, for so slight an occasion, at variance with the count, and exposed to a contest with his officers.

I obliged my wife to be silent; and after arresting five or six of the troopers, who came to get their equipages mended at Moret, and to purchase provisions, I again sent Camord to those insolent officers. They received him still worse than before, and hardly forbore laying hands on him; mingling great threatening with their complaints for the detention of their soldiers. It was no longer possible to dissemble: and all that now remained to be done, was to assert my authority, yet with all imaginable moderation. I ordered twelve other troopers, who had just entered Moret, to be arrested; and in two hours time assembled an hundred and fifty arquebusers,

1595. fiers, thirty horse, and thirty foot soldiers; with whom I marched to Saint-Mamert, by the road that leads to it by land, and which has a thick shade of trees on each side; while the rest of my troop pursued the same rout upon the river, in a flat boat covered with planks, and arrived at the same time with me under the houses of the village situated near the river. The count of Soisson's party, seeing this double escort, detached some of their men to ask me what I meant by it? "No-thing," replied I calmly, but that this village be-longing to me, I come to quarter my soldiers "here." The officers by these words understood that I was not disposed to yield to them; and sent again to make excuses for what had happened, telling me that they had no design to quarter in any place that belonged to me, without my permission; which the count of Soissons would never pardon them for. In effect, they paid for what provisions they had bought, and remounted their horses, without even demanding the prisoners, whom I sent after them as soon as they had reached Dormeilles. They thanked me, and offered me their service, which entirely removed my anger. I sent the officers a dozen bottles of wine and two pies; after which I mounted my horse, to go, in obedience to his majesty's order, to consult with the prince of Conti upon the measures necessary to be taken with regard to the count of Soissons' desertion.

This misfortune was very inconsiderable, compared to that which happened in Picardy. The jealousy of command created a misunderstanding between the duke of Nevers and the duke of Bouillon. The counts of Fuentes and Rosne, who commanded the Spanish troops, and were doubtless informed of it, took advantage of their division, and laid siege to Catelet and Capelle. The first of these two places wanted provisions and ammunition; and the second had a dishonourable governor; but the loss of them was chiefly occasioned by the two

two French generals *, who, through hatred of each other, neglected to give them any assistance.

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Things were in this state, when the governor of Ham, a place belonging to the Spaniards, being discontented with his garrison, resolved to deliver up the castle of Ham to the king, which would necessarily include the surrender of the city. He addressed himself to the duke of Longueville, and intreated him to send him a powerful assistance, having a very numerous garrison to oppose. The duke of Longueville acquainted his general officers, and the duke of Bouillon in particular, with the affair, who promised him a speedy supply. Upon this assurance, the duke of Longueville, that he might not by delay lose so favourable an opportunity, hastened immediately to Ham with d'Humières †, followed by some Picardine troops, and threw part of them into the castle, and part in the adjacent places, endeavouring to reduce the city by scaling and petarding. The enemy's garrison defended themselves like lions, and repulsed them several times; and probably a fiercer action of this kind never happened. At length, the French animated by the bravery of their leaders, who found that it was in vain to expect any assistance from the duke of Bouillon, attacked the trench next the castle, carried it, and entered the city. The Spanish garrison received them there with great intrepidity: being forced to give ground, they rallied again several times, and many little battles were fought in the squares, cross-ways, and even in the houses; till they were all, to the number of a thousand or twelve hundred men, cut in pieces. But the French bought this advantage very dear; they lost thirty of their best officers, among whom were

* Brantome justifies the duke de Nevers concerning the defeat the French met with at Dourlens; and observes that he advanced by long marches, and that he ordered them

to wait for him; but the other commanders did not think proper to do so. Tom. III: p. 268.

† Charles lord of Humières.

1595. Du Cluseau* and La Croix, and D'Humieres† himself, the best and bravest officer in all Picardy.

Messieurs de Saint-Paul, de Bouillon, and Villars, thought they could not better employ their troops, during this interval, than by raising the siege of Dourlens, which had been attacked by Fuentes and Rosne, after the taking of Catelet and Capelle. The duke of Bouillon brought four hundred horse, Villars as many, and Saint-Paul five hundred; and their infantry consisted, in all, of two thousand men, which they determined to throw into the city, if they failed of driving the besiegers from before it.

About half a league from Dourlens, Bouillon having sent fifty of his troop five hundred paces before him, to gain the summit of a mountain, from whence they might have a full view of the city and the camp of the besiegers, four of their horses, who preceded the others, perceived a body of the enemy coming directly towards them, between the camp and the hill. This was, in effect, their whole army, in order of battle, which had got intelligence of our design. But these four troopers, being hindered by their fear from making a perfect discovery, made a false report to the duke of Bouillon, who, supposing it to be only a detachment, hastened his march with his squadron. Arriving at the top of the hill, he plainly saw his mistake. One party of one hundred horse preceded two squadrons of six hundred each, which followed at the distance of about a thousand paces, and were supported by three other squadrons, consisting of an equal number, and a body of seven or eight thousand foot. The hundred horse, perceiving Bouillon, galloped towards him, followed at a great pace by the two

* N. Blanchard Du Cluseau.
† Nothing can be added to the eulogium which M. De Thou gives this gentleman, he says, book cxii. that the king and the whole king-

dom lamented him: his life and illustrious actions fill the 8930th vol. of the MSS. de la Bibliot. de Roi.

first squadrons, all armed cap-a-pie, and lances by their sides; which left him no room to doubt but that the French were discovered, and that they would be obliged to engage, notwithstanding the inequality of their numbers, the Spaniards being stronger by two thirds than they, unless he could conceal from them his little party. 1595.

Bouillon, sending a gentleman to the admiral, to desire he would come immediately to his assistance; Villars, who was bravery itself, without answering a single word, armed himself in the midst of his troopers, and making them put their helmets on, exhorted them no otherwise than by bidding them follow him; and Bouillon saw him in an instant at his side. Finding him in such a good disposition, he told him, that to prevent the enemy from discovering their rear, it was necessary to charge them with as much fury as possible. The admiral staid not to be desired a second time; but, supposing that he should be vigorously assisted by Bouillon, advanced, through emulation, before his troop, and galloping intrepidly towards the enemy, suddenly attacked the left wing, threw himself, with his pistol in his hand, amidst that forest of lances, and carrying terror and dismay through the first six hundred horse, would have cut them in pieces, and perhaps have gained still greater advantages, if he had been seconded with equal bravery: but Bouillon, on his side, made only a false attack; after which he wheeled about and retreated, and has since constantly maintained, that it was this only which had been agreed upon between the * ad-

* If we will not give credit to his biographer, let us believe M. De Thou, who entirely clears the duke de Bouillon; he, moreover, says, that the admiral de Villars was acquainted by the count de Saint-Paul to retire; but that he did not take this notice for any other than a kind of order of the duke de Bouillon, to which he re-

fused to pay any regard, through a piece of vanity and bravery which cannot be excused from the imputation of temerity, liv. cxii. D'Aubigné speaks in the same manner as De Thou, tom. III. liv. iv. ch. 9. Les Mem. de la Ligue, tom. vi. and Matthieu, tom. II. liv. 1. The opinion of Cayet is, that the admiral de Villars would willingly have

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miral and him, although all those who accompanied the latter have unanimously asserted, that he meant a true attack.

This mistake, if it was one, had a consequence as fatal as might have been expected: the enemy's squadron which Bouillon had attacked and afterwards shunned, was the first to fall upon Villars, who was then conqueror of his own; and being that instant joined by fresh troops, which came pouring on him in great numbers, his squadron, being quite overwhelmed, could find their safety only in flight. Villars, incapable of fear, and disdainful to turn his back upon the enemy, performed wonders with a few brave men who would not abandon him; but at last, being attacked on all sides, and surrounded by the enemy, they were all thrown to the ground and expired, pierced with a thousand wounds, or massacred in cold blood*.

Bouillon gained nothing by this sacrifice of his colleague: the victorious enemy attacked his squadron, the other, commanded by Saint-Paul, and the whole body of foot. Their leader had not inspired them, by his example, with a resolution to defend themselves. Bouillon and Saint-Paul fled with their cavalry, leaving the foot without any means of safety; in effect, they were all cut off. After this, the besieged city in vain demanded to capitulate. The enemy, intoxicated with their good fortune, would listen to no propositions, but stormed the place while they were parlying, and inhumanly butchered all they found in it. I had this

taken advantage of the advice which the duke of Bouillon caused to be given him to retire, but that he was then too far engaged. Chron. Novenn. liv. vii. p. 504.

* The admiral de Villars was among these last: after having been made prisoner by some Neapolitans, a Spanish captain, named Contrera, entered on purpose into a dispute with them about having

him, and he made a handle of their refusal, to kill him. L'Etoile says, that the hatred which the Spaniards bore him, from the time that he quitted the party of the league for that of the king, was the true cause of his death. He gives him the same encomiums as M. De Rosny. Journ. de P. de L'Etoile, Ann. 1595.

whole relation from La-Font, who, after the loss of his master, returned to my service; and the reader may be assured that it is absolutely true, since this man deserves all the faith that is due to a man of honour, and an eye-witness of what he relates. He told me, that more than three thousand French were lost upon this occasion; and, what is truly deplorable, more valiant men perished, than in those three great battles the king fought at Coutras, Argues, and Ivry: France, in Villars alone, sustained an irreparable loss; to the general grief of the kingdom, I joined mine in particular, for the loss of a true and incomparable friend.

Another letter, equally worthy of credit, from the sieur Baltazar, whom I had charged expressly not to omit the smallest circumstance relating to the actions of the king's army, puts it in my power to inform the reader of all that passed. In this recital he will, with great pleasure, behold a king whom the sweets of royalty had not power to alter; his successes were such, in all their circumstances, as could be attributed to nothing but his own valour and good conduct, and the glory of them was heightened by the opposition of those misfortunes which happened in all places where he was not in person. This campaign of Henry's in Franche-Comté, in the opinion of the best judges, exceeded all he had hitherto performed.

I have before observed, that marechal Riron was employed in assisting the citizens of Dijon, who held the enemy's garrison besieged in their castle. He arrived there very fortunately: the viscount of Tavannes* having brought a considerable reinforcement to this garrison, the besieged became besiegers in their turn. The citizens, pressed on all sides, and reduced to the last extremity, could only defend themselves at the end of a street to which they had retired, and had but one of the city-gates

* John de Saulx, made a marshal of France by the league, and lieutenant of Burgundy for the duke of Mâconne.

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in their possession, when Biron came to their assistance, and reanimated their courage; they once more drove out the viscount Tavannes, and surrounded the castles of Dijon and Talan*. In the midst of these transactions Biron was informed that the duke of Maïenne, full of grief for the success of the king's arms in Burgundy, had so earnestly solicited the constable of Castille for assistance, that the latter was upon the point of passing the Alps, with his army, to enter Burgundy. Biron, concealing this intelligence from the king, contented himself with only sending to intreat he would come as soon as possible to help him to reduce the castle of Dijon. The king was come to Troyes when he received the marechal's dispatches: and barely guessing at a circumstance which the marechal had an absolute certainty of, namely, that the constable of Castille, who, he supposed, would soon pass into Flanders, would take Dijon in his way, to settle there the affairs of the league with the duke of Maïenne, he marched thither hastily, and put every thing in motion, that they might find nothing more to do at their arrival.

It is not to be doubted but that these two generals might have still been able to have prevented the king, and preserved the castles of Dijon, had they not stopped unseasonably in their way to take Vesou, and some other little places in Franche-Compté, which had been seized by the troops of Lorrain. To this voluntary delay necessity afterwards added another at Gray, by the overflowing of the river Saone, which made it impossible for them to pass it. To remove this obstacle, the constable of Castille caused a bridge to be built over the river: but by his carrying on this work so slowly, it seemed as if he was afraid of engaging himself in the heart of France, with so many rivers

* About half a league from Dijon, where an Italian, named Francisque, commanded.

behind him. The truth was, this general already ^{1595.} knew that he had the king before him.

When the king left Troyes he sent the count of Torigny* with eight or nine hundred horse before him; with which marechal Biron was extremely pleased. Four days after, Henry himself arrived at Dijon, and, without dismounting, went immediately to reconnoitre the outworks, and all the neighbouring places; especially on that side where the enemy might be expected. He caused deep trenches to be made, and by that means cut off all communication between the two castles. This done, the king perceiving that notwithstanding all the efforts he could make, the castles might still hold out a long time, he went, according to his usual custom, with a small detachment to meet the enemy, that he might retard their march, and give time to the rest of their troops to finish their enterprize. Having so inconsiderable a number with him, he thought if he could find his enemies employed in their passage over the Saone, it would afford him a favourable opportunity: he therefore appointed Lux and †Fontaine-Françoise for a rendezvous for the rest of his troops, and marched before with only three hundred horse, half of whom were arquebusiers; and with this little escort advanced to the Vienne, near Saint-Seine: from thence he detached the marquis of Mirebeau ‡, with fifty or sixty horse, to get intelligence; and in the mean time he passed the river of Vienne with a hundred, or a hundred and twenty horse; designing only to reconnoitre the ground, and the form of a country, where he might possibly be obliged to come to an action.

He had not marched more than a league, when he saw Mirebeau return in great disorder: who told

* Odet de Matignon, count de Torigny, eldest son to the marechal.

† Upon the frontiers of Burgundy and Franche-Comté: this expedition happened in the beginning of June.

‡ James Cabot, marquis of Mirebeau, and count de Charni, counsellor of state, and lieutenant in Burgundy for the king, died in 1679.

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him, that he had been charged by three or four hundred horse; which had prevented him from getting a full view of the enemy; but added, that he believed those four hundred horse had been sent to seize the post of Saint-Seine, and that they were followed close by the whole army. Biron, who arrived that instant, offered to go and make a clearer discovery. At the distance of a thousand paces he found, upon a little hill, an advanced guard, consisting of sixty horse, which he attacked; and taking their place, saw plainly the whole Spanish army marching in order of battle; and in particular, a body of four hundred horse, which, advancing before the rest of the army, pursued a party of one hundred and fifty French. This was the party commanded by D'Auffonville*, whom his majesty had sent to make discoveries on the other side. D'Auffonville, by flying, turned the arms of the pursuers on Biron. The enemy's detachment dividing into two bands, attacked him on the right and left, doubtless with the same intention as Biron, to discover what forces were in the rear. The difference between them was, that the enemies, being supported by near six hundred horse, were two thirds superior in number to the two squadrons commanded by Biron and Mirebeau, which made up only three hundred.

Notwithstanding this inequality, Biron continued to make a stand: he separated his three hundred horse into three equal platoons, placing Mirebeau, with the first, on the right; the baron of Lux†, with the second, on the left; and posted himself, with the third, in the middle. The enemy attacked each side at once, with a hundred and fifty men: Lux suffered greatly, and was even thrown to the

* . . . baron D'Auffonville de Saint George, a gentleman of Lorraine.

† Edme de Malain, baron de Lux or de Luz: he was a counsellor of state, captain of fifty gens d'armes,

and the king's lieutenant in Burgundy. We shall speak of him when we come to mention marshal Biron's conspiracy, in which he was an accomplice.

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ground, with many others: Biron, having the advantage in his place, flew to his assistance, and re-animated his troops: but was himself charged with such impetuosity by all the enemy's squadrons united together, towards whom he saw others from the main body of the army still advancing, that he was obliged to retreat. This retreat, as soon as the enemy's horse drew nearer, was changed into a real flight; in which condition he came within view of the king, who immediately sent a hundred horse to support him. Nothing is more difficult than to stop the flight of a squadron when the enemy is at their heels; the last hundred men caught the contagion of fear, and returned flying with those they went to assist.

The king now finding that all depended upon himself, advanced towards the fugitives, without taking time to put on his helmet, exposed himself to the fury of the victorious squadrons, which consisted of more than eight hundred men, called his principal officers by their names, and throwing himself every where, without any regard to his own person, obliged some of the fugitives at last to stop. He composed two bodies of the whole, and putting himself at the head of a hundred and fifty horse, returned to the charge on one side, while La-Tremouille*, with a like number, did the same, by his order, on the other: had it not been for such an exertion of courage, it is probable, that not one of those three hundred men, engaged thus on the farther side of a river, with a victorious body of cavalry in front, would have escaped. The king †,

* Claude de la Trémouille, duke of Thouars.

† The king said, that upon other occasions and emergencies into which he had happened to fall, he fought for victory, but here he contended for his life. Perefie, Matthieu, Cayet, Le Graine, and D'Aubigné, relate the actions of this day in the same manner; but M. De

Thou, and vol. 3929. of the royal MSS. with some little difference. D'Aubigné says, that the king did not shew himself entirely satisfied, that only the dukes de la Tremouille and D'Elbeuf joined together with a good grace, "to brush off," says he, "the dew before his majesty." Tom. III. liv. iv. ch. 8. But according to De Thou, he com-

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giving his soldiers an example, threw himself bare-headed, amidst six of the enemy's squadrons, broke thro' them, and forced them to give ground. Biron, taking advantage of this opportunity, rallied about a hundred and twenty horse, and returned to support the king, and all together drove the enemy's horse back to the main body of the duke of Maienne's army.

Henry would not have suffered his ardour to have transported him so far, but that he did not immediately perceive, that a wood on each side of him was crouded with fusileers, to whose discharge he had like to have been exposed, and would have been surrounded by them, if, in the heat of the fight, he had attacked the Spanish army: he therefore stopped his career, and kept himself upon his guard. At that moment he perceived two other bodies of horse, who came out of one of those woods to strengthen the advanced guard, which he had vanquished. This was one of those critical moments, when the least want of precaution brings on inevitable ruin. The king, who with one glance perceived the design of these troops, ordered his to halt and thicken their ranks, that they might be

mended much before the parliament, Mirebeau, La Curée, and many others.

"I have no need of counsel but of assistance," replied Hen. IV. to those who advised him to make his escape on a good turkish horse that was got ready for him; "there is more hazard in the flight than the chase." Matthieu, tom. II. liv. i. p. 187. "Mainville," adds this historian, "who stood near him, and had his pistol ready charged for the first of the enemy that came near him, let fire at one so *a propos*, that he shot him quite through the head; and the ball came whistling so about the king's ears, that he never spoke of a pistol but he remembered this report, saying, that it was

"the loudest he had ever heard, having been charged with two steel balls." According to the account of the same historian, the duke de Maienne demanded only four hundred horse of the Spanish general to attack the king's troops; which the Spaniard refused him, being persuaded that Henry only wanted to draw him into an ambuscade. This distrust of the enemy was the occasion of his escape at Fontaine Françoise, as it had been before at Aumale. And what is more surprising is, that this prince only lost six men in so hot an action; while on the enemy's side were killed one hundred and twenty, besides two hundred wounded, and sixty taken prisoners. Chron. Novenn. liv. vii. p. 497.

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in a condition to receive them; for in the heat of his victory he overturned all that opposed him, and found himself at large before all those battalions, who were astonished at the miracles they saw him perform. Henry knew this surprize would not last long, and that he would have the fury of a whole army to sustain, animated by the sight of a handful of foes, to repair the shame of such an astonishing defeat; he therefore took advantage of the enemy's inaction, to regain at least his first post, without being pursued; and disengaged himself from the midst of the enemy's army with so much order and superiority, that they could make themselves no amends for their loss. And this prince, in one day, and almost in one moment, acquired the honour of the most glorious victory, and finest retreat, that ever any history afforded an example of.

On his arrival, he found the count of Chiverny*, the chevalier d'Oise, messieurs de Vitry, de Clermont, de Risse, d'Arambure, de La-Curée, D'Heures, de Saint-Geran, and de La-Boulaye, with each his company, which being joined to those troops the king had before, composed a body of eight hundred horse. After this reinforcement, the enemy durst not attack them, being persuaded that his whole army was not far off; and not yet recovered from their consternation at the defeat of their men by a platoon scarce the sixth part of their number, they turned back, placing the infantry in the rear to cover their cavalry. The king followed them close, and harrassed them continually, till they had repassed the Saone upon the bridge

* Henry Huralt, count de Chiverny, George de Brancas-Villars, Louis de l'Hôpital-Vitry, George de Clermont D'Amboise, . . . de Crequy de Risse, Jean D'Arambure, and Gilbert Filhet de La-Curée, who also was in the engagement, where he fought with-

out armour, and badly mounted. A voice, which he thought to be the king's, called to him, "Take care, Curé; when, lo, he found it was one of the enemy, who was just ready to run him through with his lance; but he killed him. Vol. 8929. MSS. de la Bibliot. de Roi.

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they had built below Gray. Not daring to attempt the passage again, Burgundy, by this exploit, remained wholly at the king's discretion: he reduced it all in a few days, except the Seure *, and seized several little towns in Franche-Comté, which he released, at the intreaty of the Swiss. These advantages were all owing to the battle of Fontaine-Françoise.

Henry, when he learnt the defeat of his forces in Picardy, confessed, that those advantages, great as they were, did not equal that loss. He quitted Burgundy and the Lyonnois immediately, and marched hastily towards Paris. Passing by Moret, I acquainted him with my motives for leaving the council: he approved of them, and was of opinion, that the confidence which the other members of it perceived he reposed in me, and the desire I had to make myself still more worthy that distinction, had drawn their enmity upon me. He had the goodness to console me for it, by assuring me that my sufferings upon this occasion would only increase his friendship for me. I agreed with his majesty, that at a time when the check his forces received at Dourlens might occasion a revolution, there was a necessity to dissemble his disgust, and to avoid accusing any one. It was to me only that the king complained of the authors of that fatal accident, and deplored the dangerous effects of enmity between leaders, which is almost the sole cause of the greatest disasters in war. He appeared sensibly affected with the loss of admiral Villars, and never mentioned him but with the highest praises; nor could he be deceived by any thing which the interested parties advanced, to place all that had happened to the account of the deceased.

It was then that this prince was convinced, and acknowledged to me, that he had yielded unrea-

* Seure, a town upon the river Saone: it has changed its name, and now is called Bellegarde.

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sonably to proposals for a war, the success of which he had been persuaded was infallible: he was even candid enough to treat it as an error which might plunge France once more into greater miseries than those she had just been delivered from. By speaking thus, the king only reflected on the greatness of a loss, such as Catelet, Capelle Ardres*, Dourlens, Cambray, from which Balagny had been just driven; and Calais especially, which though not yet taken was looked upon as already lost. As for me, I thought the kingdom was then in most danger, when the king, by an astonishing instance of valour and good fortune, preserved Burgundy and his own life. From that time Henry used to say, that a declaration of war was one of those affairs that required the greatest deliberation, and could never be sufficiently enough attended to. From this example, princes may still draw another lesson no less useful, which is, that they ought never to entertain a personal hatred for their neighbours, and that prudence, on certain occasions, requires them to seem disposed for a reconciliation, notwithstanding the most violent, and even the most just resentment.

The king was careful to avoid discovering his thoughts in public; on the contrary, he endeavoured to revive the courage of those who seemed most deprest. To the Parisians, who made him compliments of condolence upon his loss, he replied, that it might be easily repaired, provided they would join actions to words. They made him great offers; but his majesty, who had had frequent proofs of the little dependance he could have on them, took his own measures, and without waiting for the accomplishment of their promises, left Paris the next day, with the satisfaction

* Ardres was surrendered to the enemy by the count de Belin, almost without making any defence; for which he was disgraced, turned

out of his places, and sent home to his estate, &c. Bongars Epist. 75. ad Camer, Morisot, ch. 33.

1595. of hearing before he went, by a courier from Rome, that the pope had been at last prevailed upon to grant him the absolution * he had so long solicited. In the present conjuncture, this news was of the utmost importance.

To this absolution the holy father annexed the following conditions † : That the king should ex-

* "What made the pope, says M. De Perfixe, delay giving absolution so long was, said he, because that he alone had the power of restoring penitents : and he was very much displeased that the prelates of France had taken upon them to absolve him, though they had only done it provisionally, *ad cautelam*."

† Besides these conditions, the original of which may be seen in vol. 8778 of the MSS, de la Biblioth. du Roi, where the act of absolution of Henry IV. is set down at length, in Italian, the holy father imposes therein for penance upon this prince, to hear on every Sunday and festival, a conventual mass in the chapel royal, and private mass every week day, to say the rosary every Sunday, the chaplet every Saturday, and the litanies every Wednesday, to fast every Friday, to confess and communicate publicly at least four times a year. I observe, in this act, that the pope, after having given this prince absolution, then entitles him only the king of France and Navarre. At each verse of the *Miserere*, the holy father gave a light touch of the penitentiary crook on the shoulders of M. Du Perron, and M. D'Ossat, who are therein called *Procuratori di Navarra* : this is but an ordinary formality in this sort of ceremony ; upon which the protestant writers have not failed to comment with great malignity, by saying, that Henry IV. had submitted to receive lashes of the whip from the procurator, and other such like ca-

lumnies : but these malicious pleasantries have not been able to impose upon any, since M. de Thou and all the sensible writers have shewn that they were altogether unjust and without foundation. M. de Sully, as far as appears, had got over this popular error ; but I know not if he observes the same equity with regard to M. D'Ossat.

What he says here, and in many other places of these Memoirs, excited in me a curiosity to read carefully the collection of this cardinal's letters, who is reputed amongst us to have been as good a Frenchman as an able statesman. I will speak freely my mind as to each grievance which furnishes the duke de Sully with occasion of attacking him, according as they fall in my way. And to begin with that of Henry IVth's absolution, it appears to me, after examining all he says on this head, page 45, 48, 105, 107, 115, 129, 208, &c. of the old edition in folio, that we cannot but acknowledge on one hand, that he met with great scruples in the pope's breast, and real difficulties on the part of the sacred college ; that he applied himself with great assiduity and with equal success to surmount them ; and that any but he would have had much to do to have conquered them ; as is evident from what happened to the duke de Nevers, the cardinal de Retz, the marquis de Pisany, and others : that for his own part he is very far from approving the many subterfuges to which the court of Rome had of-

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clude the protestants from all employments and dignities, and use his utmost endeavours to suppress them entirely: That he should restore the celebration of mass in Bearn, and oblige the huguenots to make restitution to the catholics of all the effects which had been taken from the ecclesiastics: That he should prevail upon the prince of Condé to embrace the Roman catholic religion: That he should publish and cause the council of Trent to be received: and lastly, That the jesuits should be again established in France. These conditions which regarded the protestants and the council of Trent were not complied with, the rest were.

Those persons who thought the king received laws from the pope upon this occasion, ought to lay the blame upon Du-Perron, and still more upon Arnaud D'Ossat, then agent for this affair at Rome. These two ecclesiastics were so far from rejecting these conditions, that they would have been grieved, if they had not been insisted upon; if any credit may be given to a memorial which was many years afterwards sent me from Rome, and which I shall speak of fully in its place: it af-

ten recourse in their formalities; and even that all this chicane made him often uneasy, as also the unfair dealing which, he complains, they used in the bull of absolution. However, in opposition to all this, a man may perceive on the other hand in these very places, and still more in all those passages that in any measure relate to the protestants, the jesuits, or the council of Trent, &c. that his eminence was not at all disturbed, that the affair of the king's absolution had passed under the restrictions of which M. de Sully complains so bitterly: whether it was that M. D'Ossat did not perceive therein the pretended lesion of the honour of the crown, and the prejudice done to the liberties of the Gallican church,

which I leave to the learned to determine; or whether he believed that all these precautions became necessary for the interest of religion; or lastly, whether he were not biassed in favour of the maxims of the league: and yet all this does not hinder me from subscribing to the encomiums which our best historians have given this cardinal; and in the last place Amelot de la Houssaye, in the life he gives us of him that is prefixed to the edition of his letters, to which I refer the reader. The abbé Du-Perron and M. de Villeroi, had likewise done considerable service to Henry IV, in the affair of his absolution. Matthieu, tom. II. liv. ii. p. 210. & seq.

1595. fords a complete proof of what I have just advanced, at least with regard to D'Ossat.

This memorial advances two things relating to the king's absolution, which proves one of the principal articles : that the pope and the whole sacred college were so ardently desirous of the king's applying to Rome for this ceremony, that they could not conceal their fears, when they were sometimes informed that Henry would be brought to despise it, or look upon it as useless ; and this the author proves from their own letters : secondly, that D'Ossat, instead of informing the king of this disposition in the court of Rome, which he would have done had his honour and dignity been of the smallest consequence to him, on the contrary gave this prince to understand, that he could not obtain a reconciliation with his holiness, but by offering an incroachment upon the liberties of the Gallican church, and purchasing it by those conditions already mentioned. Henry, however, rewarded his two agents with the highest dignities in the prelacy.

In three days his majesty arrived at Péronne, where he was immediately saluted by Balagny. This man, who by an excess of ridiculous vanity *,

* M. de Perefice says, that Cambrai was taken by famine : others, as Matthieu, blame the misunderstanding that subsisted between the duke de Nevers and de Bouillon for it ; and others again the negligence of Balagny. The Memoirs of the league, Tom. VI. remark, that three companies of Swiss, not having had their pay given them, compelled him to deliver up the place. All the historians have cried up the courage of Renée de Clermont, the wife of Balagny, and sister to the brave Bully d'Amboise, who, after having, to no purpose, done all she could to inspire resolution into the garrison

and her husband, did not chuse to survive the loss of her principality, and died either of famine or grief. " And here in one article, is an " abstract of the greatest disgrace " that France has suffered from " foreigners in the memory of " man." So speaks D'Aubigné, in concluding the 9th chapter, liv. iv. tom. III. of his history, in which he has collected the taking of Catelet, la Capelle, Ardres, Cambrai, Calais, and the defeat at Dourlens. Balagny tells a Spanish officer, who seemed surprised at seeing him take his mistress along with him, and in the same boat, that love softened all the crofses

1595.

had just lost his government, his fortune, his wife, and his honour, instead of blushing for his folly, and concealing himself from reproach, affected to shew himself, talked big; and in this state, which was indeed the fittest for him, expected all that regard which is generally paid to unfortunate sovereigns. The king resolved to attempt all things to assist Calais: finding that his troops were not sufficient to storm the camp of the besiegers, he took the only course that now remained, which was to throw himself into the place, at the head of a considerable reinforcement. Twice he embarked with this design, but a contrary wind forced him back again to land. While he despaired of accomplishing his enterprise, Matelet, governor of Foix, came to him, and offered to attempt a third time to enter Calais, promising him that, if he would give him four or five hundred gentlemen, he would so manage, either by sea, or land, that he would open himself a passage. The king praising his resolution, gave him the escort he demanded; with which Matelet succeeded in his design, and entered Calais, after having surmounted a thousand obstacles*. But the glory of this brave action was soon obliterated, when it appeared that he had only joined the garrison to be infected with their

cidents of fortune: "Right, replied the Spaniard, and especially at present, as you will have less to do than you have had before." P. Matthieu, tom. II. liv. ii. p. 219.

* Historians do not agree as to this action. Some, as De Thou and D'Aubigné, by saying nothing at all of it, seem to call it in question; others ascribe it to the sieur de Campagnole the younger, Davila and our Memoirs, to Matelet, governor of Foix. Queen Elizabeth offered to defend Calais against the Spaniards, upon condition that the place were put into the hands

of the English. Sancy, who was then ambassador at London, made answer to the queen, that the king his master would rather have it in the hands of the Spaniards than in those of the English: and Henry IV. said himself, "if he were to be bit, he had rather it was by a lion than a lioness;" and this was the reason that Queen Elizabeth afterwards refused to besiege that town, while Henry IV. lay before that of Amiens, though they offered then to put it into her hands by way of security. Matthieu, *ibid.* p. 223.

fears,

1595. fears, and to consent to a capitulation: and the king had the mortification to march to Calais, only to see it surrendered before his face.

If it be demanded where during this time were all those French noblemen and officers who were so forward in advising the war; and why they suffered the king to bear the whole burthen of it, and suffer repeated losses? It must be owned, to the dishonour of the French name, that they expected to draw advantages to themselves by the misfortunes their imprudence occasioned, and their negligence augmented; and formed, in the mean time, projects more fatal to the king's authority than the bloodiest foreign war. These projects I shall mention immediately.

The king, equally superior to good and bad fortune, comforted those that were driven out of Calais, provided for the security of Boulogne, Abbeville, Montreuil, Monthulin*, and other towns and castles, and marched towards Saint-Quentin, fearing lest the enemies, who were not far from those quarters, should surprise some of the nobles, and general officers who came thither separately. They chose this opportunity for the execution of a design which they had formed, before they left Paris. The duke of Montpensier was the person whom they charged with this commission, not because he was more disaffected than the rest, but because his temper was most easy, and his understanding the weakest. He accosted the king at Saint-Quentin; and, in the name of the principal French nobility, proposed to him, as the only means of subduing his enemies, to resign to the governors of provinces the property of their governments, with an hereditary right to them, requiring nothing of them but their allegiance.

It is not easy to comprehend how a proposal which had so manifest a tendency to throw France

* Cities and forts in Picardy.

1595.

into a state of anarchy, that in former ages had filled it with blood and horror, could proceed from the mouth of a Frenchman, a prince, and what is more, a prince of the royal blood. Henry, struck with astonishment at the prodigious insolence of this affront offered to the royal dignity, for some moments could not utter a word, while the duke of Montpensier continuing a speech which had been studied long before, endeavoured to prove to his majesty, that while those governors, or rather those little princes, obliged themselves to maintain troops always ready for his service, he would be never again reduced to such a situation as he was in at present, to appear before his enemies without soldiers to oppose them. The king, though agitated with various passions, discovered none to the duke, but pity towards him for the unworthy part he played. He stopped him from proceeding farther, by telling him, without the least resentment, that he had already heard too much; and that he was convinced those French nobles had taken advantage of the easiness of his temper, to make him the bearer of a proposal, the whole meanness of which he was not sensible of; he who was a prince of the blood, and nearer the crown than himself had formerly been. The king added much more to the same purpose, with equal calmness, and was so far from being apprehensive that he should be reduced to yield to such a proposition, and so determined to suffer a thousand deaths, if possible, rather than bring such a load of infamy upon the royal dignity, that he had not even the thought of entering into any discussion of this project, or of uttering a single word in answer to it*.

The duke of Montpensier became sensible of his fault, by the air and tone with which his majesty

* "We are all gentlemen," said Henry IV. sometimes, before the princes of the blood.

1596. spoke to him; he blushed, and asked pardon for it, and intreated the king never to remember that he had been capable of thus degrading himself from his rank. The king, after having shewn the duke the whole extent of his fault, directed him how, in some measure, to repair it, with those who had prevailed upon him to commit it; and assured him, that he for his own part would forget it entirely, and still regard him as a kinsman.

The duke of Montpensier agreed to take the first opportunity that offered, when the authors of that insolent proposal brought it again on the carpet, to declare that he had reflected well upon the commission they had given him; that they might send their proposal by any other person, since he absolutely disapproved of it; and if ever he was to mention it to his majesty, it should be with a design to dissuade him from it; and that they might depend upon his using his utmost endeavours to hinder its taking effect. He performed this task so exactly, and with an air so natural, that he wholly disconcerted all those noblemen, and left them no inclination to make any attempts on his fidelity for the future.

It was therefore to reduce the king to the necessity of making them his equals, that the princes and governors of provinces in France so ill performed their promise of assisting him with troops. The duke of Bouillon was one of those who sold his services the dearest. His majesty, not doubting but he had a part in the plot, was willing to have a proof of it from the duke's perplexity, without letting him know that he was informed of it by other means. Bouillon did not want art and eloquence enough to conceal whatever he designed should not be known; but, besides that Henry possessed in no less degree the art of penetrating into the thoughts of those with whom he conversed, the presence of a sovereign is alone capable of abashing a man conscious of any secret guilt

1596.

guilt towards him. The king began by convincing himself that the duke of Montpensier had not betrayed their late discourse to the duke of Bouillon. After which he introduced the defeat of Dourlens by asking him plainly, and with a kind of confidence, how it happened that he had been disappointed in those certain correspondencies which as he said he carried on in Liege, Namur, and many other places in Luxembourg, and Hainault, upon which he was sensible the war had been undertaken?

Bouillon, embarrassed by the question, and that air of simplicity with which it was proposed, instead of giving a direct answer concerning his pretended correspondencies, fell into long speeches, without meaning or end, which betrayed him more effectually, than the most sincere confession could have done. He accused all the world, the duke of Nevers, who he said had corrupted his officers and obstructed his levies; the English, for not making the promised diversion; the Dutch, for taking advantage of this conjuncture to increase their power on the side of Over-Issel and Friesland. Upon which the duke of Bouillon, who sought only to turn the conversation still more from the first subject, told the king, that the true cause of the misfortune which had lately happened, was, that his majesty had no person of consequence, and on whom he could have an absolute dependance, at the court of London, to hasten the supplies that had been promised there; and at the same time offered himself for this embassy, and even solicited it earnestly. The king being of opinion that it would answer no purpose to press the duke any farther upon this fault, ceased to mention it; and reflecting that he should not lose much by his absence, consented at last to the embassy to England. Accordingly his commission was made out, and the duke of Bouillon, a few days after, set out for that kingdom.

1596.

It was from his majesty himself that I had an account of this conversation with the duke of Bouillon, as likewise that with the duke of Montpensier before mentioned.

The king had no sooner quitted Bouillon, than reflecting that the duke, instead of having any design to serve him usefully at the court of London, had possibly only solicited that employment to give bad impressions there of his conduct, or at least to labour only for his own interest, he sent Jaquinot for me early in the morning, to communicate this fear to me. I kneeled on a cushion at his bedside, and his majesty asked me immediately what was said, and what I, in particular, thought of the long conversation he had just held with the duke of Bouillon. I replied, that every one guessed his own way; and that probably the affair of Ham, and Dourlens, and the proposal made by the duke of Montpensier, made up the greatest part of it. The king told me that I was mistaken; that he was too well acquainted with the duke of Bouillon's disposition, to doubt that any reproaches upon those occasions, instead of correcting, would only serve to throw him into an open revolt. His majesty afterwards, repeating exactly all that has been related concerning the embassy to England, proposed to me to accompany the duke of Bouillon thither, that I might carefully observe his conduct.

In courts every thing is brought about by artifice. The king, after his conversation with the duke of Bouillon, telling his council for the finances, that he had sent the duke to England, these gentlemen, after conferring together, found nothing so fit to satisfy their hatred of me, as to persuade the king to join me with the duke of Bouillon. My abilities for negotiations were praised, an honour which they were resolved to deprive me of, when they had once succeeded in removing me from the king, who not penetrating into their views, approved of the proposal. But I did not
so

so easily fall into the snare: I shewed his majesty the true motive of these gentlemen's feigned generosity with regard to me. From the moment that the duke of Bouillon discovered that I watched his conduct, and disconcerted his projects, he would not fail to break with me; and such a genius as he possessed, when animated with malice, would suggest to him the means of throwing upon me the blame of all the faults he committed, and all the good he neglected to do. My enemies knew this as well as I; his majesty was convinced by my reasons, and pressed me no farther.

The gentlemen of the council did not stop here: when they came again to the king, they were the first to confess that it was with reluctance they joined me to the duke of Bouillon; but since the duke was to stay but a short time at London, they had pitched upon me to take his place with the same title and equal honours. All was alike to them, provided they could get rid of me. The king was again influenced by their opinions, and some days after, declared his intention to me; ordering me to make preparations immediately for this voyage; to provide myself with money, and to dispose my wife to follow me, if I chose to have her with me; which, however, he did not think necessary, since I should not, he said, be absent above seven or eight months at most. The king perceiving my reluctance, accompanied this order with the most kind and obliging expressions his imagination could suggest; he told me that the present perplexed situation of his affairs hindering him from giving me the sole direction of the finances, he should reproach himself for exposing to the dangers of a long and furious siege the only man in the kingdom whom he thought worthy to fill that important post. His majesty had just then declared himself publicly concerning the siege of La-Fere.

While the king was speaking, I was struck with astonishment at the obstinate persecution of my e-

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nemies, and the depth of their malice. Under the appearance of a title of honour vain in itself, and fatal in its consequences, they took away, and perhaps for ever, all opportunities of advancing me: For who in my absence would be solicitous for my interest? Who would hinder them from prolonging my stay out of the kingdom, till, affairs having taken a fixed and durable state in France, there would be nothing left for a man who, by so long an absence, would be regarded as a stranger. These reflections kept me firm in my resolution not to go. I intreated the king not to force me to a journey for which I felt an invincible repugnance; and I had the good fortune to find that Henry was of himself disposed to believe that I should be of more use to him at Paris than London, during the siege he was going to undertake: he therefore sent me thither to facilitate his supplies of money, to furnish him with whatever was necessary towards carrying on the siege, to receive his orders there, make one in his council, and direct its resolutions. Had the choice of my revenge been in my own power, I could not have fixed upon any more effectual.

MEMOIRS

MEMOIRS

OF

SULLY.

BOOK VIII.

THE motive which had determined the king to undertake so difficult a siege as that of La-Fere, was, that, his enemies having after their success separated their troops, he would not suffer his own, who had at last assembled, to remain idle, there being a necessity to secure Picardy, already shaken by so many repeated losses. Had I had the liberty of disposing of myself as I pleased, I should have chosen to have continued with the king during this siege, whose too great solicitude for my safety I could by no means approve: but I did not dare to refuse the commission which would detain me in Paris; and his majesty, to render this order less displeasing, assured me, that he would not for a long time attempt any thing considerable against La-Fere; and that some time or other, he would permit me to make a journey thither. In reality I did so several times, but I had no sooner arrived, than the necessity of providing for the subsistence of his troops obliged me to return again immediately. I comforted myself, however, with the thought, that through my diligence the army being supplied with every thing it had

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1596. occasion for, I might flatter myself with having, in some measure, contributed to the success of this siege, which lasted six months, and was the longest that Henry was ever engaged in. This place, besides its advantageous fortifications, had a very numerous garrison, composed of chosen soldiers, and commanded by two excellent officers, the one a Frenchman *, high steward of Montelimart; and the other a Spaniard, named Osorio.

Beringhen †, at the persuasions of an engineer who was his friend and kinsman, and had come expressly for that purpose from Flanders, where he lived, took it into his head that it was possible to lay all La-Fere under water; and, upon the assurances of his friend, was so confident of success, that the king, though contrary to his own judgment, suffered him to make the attempt: it would indeed have shortened the siege; but it is to be observed, that almost all projects of this kind are liable to fail: the slightest mistake is sufficient to ruin them, and it seldom happens but some mistake is made. The project of turning the course of the Tesein formerly cost Francis I. the loss of a battle, together with his liberty. In one of these journies I made to the camp, I found this proposal upon the carpet. I looked upon the execution of it to be impossible, and I combated it with all my force: but the engineer wanted not plausible reasons to oppose to ours. According to him, it was an attempt that would cost but little time and trouble; all they had to do was to raise a causey: this they performed; and the water destroying their work two or three times, they renewed it as often; at last it became proof against the water, but the river did not rise to the height they expected: it is true, indeed, that it wanted only six feet, but that was sufficient

* His name was Colas; the Spaniards had promised to make him count de La-Fere.

† Peter de Beringhen was himself a Fleming, and born at Brussels.

to force them to abandon the work*, after having consumed in it a great deal of time and money. 1596.

The king falling sick at Traversy, where his head-quarters were, the siege of La-Fere suffered a still longer delay. As soon as the news was brought me I flew to him, and never left him till his health was perfectly re-established. His sickness was considerable enough to make me apprehend for France the greatest loss it could possibly sustain. The governor of La-Fere, finding himself in want of every thing that could enable him to hold out a longer time, surrendered the place to the king, who caused it to be repaired; and at the intreaty of madam de Liancourt, he appointed her son Cæsar to be governor of it, Manicamp, a kinsman † of this lady, performing all the functions of that office, in quality of his lieutenant.

His majesty marching afterwards to the frontiers of Artois, took the castle of Imbercourt by assault; and thought to have done the same, by petard, with the city of Arras. Marechal Biron ‡ was the cause of the ill success of this last enterprize, by not providing himself with a sufficient quantity of petards: the three first they applied played tolerably well, but the fourth being thrown, without effect, into the ditch, with the person that directed it, several of our men were killed and wounded by it. It was, indeed, a mortifying thought, that a conquest of such importance, which would have secured Amiens from the misfortune which soon after happened to it, should be lost for want of a petard or two more. Biron, to avoid the reproaches he had reason to expect, got out of the way, and went

* D'Aubigné does not speak of it so contemptibly, ch. 12. *ibid.*
 " The causey," says he, " having
 " made the river Oise flow back
 " within La-Fere, it spoiled all
 " the magazines they had in the
 " lower parts and cellars of the
 " town. It was a large machine,
 " above a quarter of a league in

" length. Such an undertaking
 " shews, that neither the king nor
 " the kingdom was dispirited un-
 " der their pressures and disadvan-
 " tages."

† Philip de Longueval, sieur de Manicamp.

‡ Biron, in his turn, loudly exclaimed against the king's avarice.

1596. to discharge his rage upon the country about Ba-paume, where he made a horrible devastation.

The ill success of the attempt upon Arras was sufficiently compensated by many favourable events that happened at the end of the preceding year and beginning of this, which I shall pass over slightly as usual; these were, the reduction of Toulouse*, the prosperity of the king's arms in Provence, and the reunion of the chiefs of the league in the king's party. Joyeuse†, who had quitted the habit of a monk, to resume that of a soldier, and paid himself with usury for the mortifications of a cloister, made a treaty with the king about that time. The duke of Nemours‡ followed his example; but just as it was upon the point of being concluded, he died || with vexation, as some believe, for the bad success of so many great projects. Saint-Sorlin, his brother, continued the treaty for himself. The death of the duke of Nevers§ delivered the king

* As to these facts, consult the histories before mentioned for the years 1595 and 1596.

† Henry de Joyeuse. He again entered himself among the capuchins, and died there, under the name of father Ange.

‡ Henry de Savoie-Nemours.

|| "He voided, by his mouth and pores, every drop of blood in his body." Prefixe, *ibid.* Cayet gives a very moving description of it, *ibid.* p. 519.

§ Louis de Gonzague died of a dysentery at Nefse in 1595, aged fifty-six: of chagrin, say others, because that when he talked with Henry IV. advising him with regard to Calais, this prince made answer, "How can you advise me on this head? you who have never been nigher that town than seven leagues." Tho' M. De Thou, *liv. cxiii.* and Brantome, *tom. III. p. 259.* very much extol him, the charge which the duke de Sully brings against him, of having been always a very expensive servant to his master, may be easily

made out, even from this general's own letters to Henry IV. of which we have a collection in De Nevers's *Memoirs*, *tom. II. p. 207, 376.*

"If your majesty," says he to him in one of his letters, "cannot or will not come this length, I shall remove so far, that there will be no grounds to expect any success from me. In truth, sire, you do not make me returns suitable to the manner in which I serve you; and it appears to all the world that you do not value me much.—I never was treated in the manner you treat me by the kings your predecessors; from them I received many favours, whereby I was obliged to serve them implicitly; and I am yet to receive the first favour from your majesty. If fatal and ruinous commissions be not the favours I receive from you, I will be so free as to tell you, that I have received no other since you were pleased to order me into these parts." &c. p. 348. And there are a great ma-

likewise

likewise from a troublesome useless servant. Lastly, 1596. the duke of Maïenne, now absolutely disgusted with the treachery of the Spaniards, began to think seriously upon means to restore himself to the favour of the king.

The king thought it of such importance to make himself master of Arras, that he resolved to besiege it in form. I was the only person to whom he communicated this design; secrecy was of such consequence on this great occasion, that he durst not trust any one with the care of making observations upon the place, and therefore undertook that task himself. I had continued the whole winter at Paris, employed in his majesty's service, and sometimes made little excursions to Moret, in which I took great delight. One day, when I was busy in overseeing my workmen, who were levelling the high grounds about two thousand paces from my house, to bring thither two rivulets which form those two sheets of water which are at present near the great alley, a courier from madam de Liancourt arrived, who brought me a letter from this lady, and another from his majesty, in which he informed me of his designs upon Arras, and the methods by which he hoped to succeed. I had never seen this prince in so great a rage as by this letter he appeared to be, against the "impositions and rogueries (these were his words) of eight gluttons;" who were given him, he said, instead of one that he had before: "those rascals," added he, "with that prodigious number of intendants, who have brought in all their male and female gossips, feast together, and have consumed above a hundred thousand crowns, a sum large enough to drive all the Spaniards out of France." This was, indeed, exactly true,

my more letters in the same strain. It is from these the duke of Sully, to whom Henry IV. communicated all his cabinet secrets, formed a judgment as to the dispositions of

the duke de Nevers, and not from those he writ to several other persons, which shew great attachment and zeal for the king's person.

which,

1596. which I shall make sufficiently clear when I enter into an account of the finances; at present I shall only relate two or three circumstances.

The council of the finances supposed, that in order to furnish the supplies for the siege of La-Fere, they should be called upon to clear their accounts: in this, however, they were mistaken, the king having put the superintendency of the siege wholly into my hands. These supplies Descures, La-Corbiniere, and some other contractors, with whom the financiers lived in such intelligence, that they made use occasionally of their names, without admitting them to more than very small shares, were engaged to procure. They then treated, under these borrowed names, with tradesmen and purveyors, who commonly served them at the lowest prices, and contrived to charge to the king thrice the real expence.

The following fact I had from the king himself. Very considerable arrears were due from the royal treasury to the Swiss soldiers, German horse, and other foreigners in the French pay. The council suborned a man, named Otoplote, who gave the receivers deputed by these foreigners to understand, that they must never expect to be paid, unless they consented to reduce their demands to such a moderate sum as could be given them, without draining the exchequer. The reduction was agreed to; but the gentlemen of the council charged the whole sum to the king's account, and by this means robbed his majesty, or rather the lawful creditors, of the overplus.

To this many other frauds of the same kind may be added. These gentlemen revelled in luxury, while the king and his household wanted necessaries. A few days after that on which his majesty wrote to me, he sent to inform them that he had occasion for eight hundred thousand crowns, for an enterprise of great importance (the siege of Arras); he intreated, he conjured them to let him have this sum, but in vain; all the answer he could get was,

that

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that so far from being able to furnish him with what he demanded, they knew not how to supply the expences of his household. It is, indeed, curious to see how this household was supported. "I am," says this amiable and worthy prince, in a letter to me, "very near my enemies, and hardly a horse to carry me into the battle, nor a complete suit of armour to put on; my shirts are all ragged, my doublets * out at elbow, my kettle is seldom on the fire, and these two last days I have been obliged to dine where I could, for my purveyors have informed me, that they have not wherewithal to furnish my table." Those belonging to the gentlemen of the council were better provided. Henry, in his letter, deplored these monstrous abuses, less on his own account than on his people's, whom he said he looked upon as his children, since heaven had given him no others, and proposed to me the design of assembling the states of the kingdom, to consider of a remedy for all these misdemeanors.

I obeyed the order the king gave me to burn his letter, but not till I had taken a copy of it; and the reasons for keeping it secret no longer subsisting, I think it my duty to publish the contents, as a proof of the wisdom and goodness of this prince: his majesty concluded his letter with ordering me to come to him in Picardy, and to conduct his mistress thither. We were the only persons to whom he could disclose his thoughts with freedom. The letter from madam de Liancourt was very short; in it she informed me, that she would set out the Tuesday following, in order to reach Maubuisson on Wednesday, where she had a sister †, who was abbess, and that she would wait for me there.

* "I have seen upon him," says Le Grain, liv. viii. "a coat of plain white cloth, that was very much soiled by his breast-plate, and torn in the sleeves; as also stockings that were much worn and holed through on the sword-side."
† Aneglica D'Estrées.

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I arrived at Corbeil on Saturday evening, intending to pass part of Sunday and all Monday at Paris, having some purchases to make for the palace. Just as I entered the street de la Coutellerie, I met a messenger from madam de Liancourt, who acquainted me, that that lady having received fresh letters from the king, and also an account that her sister, the abbess of Maubuisson, was ill, she had determined to set out before the day appointed, and that I might join her at Pontoise. I suspected this lady had an intention to make her court to the king at the expence of my dilatoriness; I therefore altered my resolution, and told my people, that I would go that same night to Maubuisson, without stopping at Paris but only while I refreshed myself and baited my horses, which I did at the first inn I came to, whose sign was the three pigeons. The mention of this inn recalls to my remembrance a comical adventure which happened to me there.

Entering, without any attendants, into a very large chamber, I found a man walking about it very fast, and so absorbed in thought, that he neither saluted me, nor, as I imagine, perceived my entrance. Looking at him with more attention, every thing in his person, his manner, countenance, and dress, appeared to me very uncommon; his body was long and slender, his face thin and withered, his beard white and forked; he had a large hat on his head which covered his face, a cloak buttoned close at the collar, boots of an enormous size, a sword that trailed on the ground, and in his hand a large double bag, like those that are tied to saddle-bows. I asked him, in a raised tone of voice, if he lodged in that chamber, and why he seemed in such profound contemplation? My man, affronted at the question, without saluting or even deigning to look at me, answered me rudely, that he was in his own chamber, and that he was thinking of his affairs, as I might do of mine. Altho' I was a little surpris'd at his impertinence, I never-

theless

theless desired him very civilly to permit me to dine in that chamber; a proposal which he received grumbling, and was followed by a refusal still less polite. That moment three of my gentlemen, my pages, and some footmen, entering the room, my brutal companion thought fit to soften his looks and words, pulled off his hat, and offered me every thing in his power: then suddenly, eying me with a fixed regard, asked me, with a wild air, where I was going? I told him to meet the king: "What, sir," he replied, "has the king sent for you? Pray tell me on what day and hour you received his letters, and also at what hour you set out?"

It was not difficult to discover an astrologer by these questions, which he asked me with an invincible gravity. I was farther obliged to tell him my age, and to allow him to look into my hands.

After all these ceremonies were over, "Sir," said he with an air of surprise and respect, "I will resign my chamber to you very willingly, and before it be long, many more persons will quit their places to you with more regret than I do mine." The more I pretended to be astonished at his great abilities, the more he endeavoured to give me proofs of them; he promised me riches, honours, and power (astrologers are seldom niggards) and added, that if I would inform him of the hour of my birth, he would tell me all that had or ever would happen to me; but without desiring to know my name, or telling me his, he thought proper, after these words, to leave me precipitately, excusing himself for not staying longer with me, upon the necessity he was under to carry some papers immediately to his advocate and procurator. I made no efforts to detain him; but it was not the same with my people, whom I perceived to be seized with fear and respect at every word this madman uttered. I diverted my wife

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In the evening I arrived at Maubuisson, which serves for a suburb to Pontoise: there I met madam de Liancourt, with whom I took the road next day to Clermont. I rode about seven or eight hundred paces before the litter in which this lady was, and which was followed at some distance by a great unwieldy coach that carried her women; before and behind this coach marched several mules loaded with baggage. About a league from Clermont, where the road was very narrow, a steep hill on one side, and a hanging valley on the other, leaving only room enough for two carriages to go a-breast; the coachman alighting upon some occasion or other, one of the mules passing near the side of the coach, after it stopped, by its neighing, and the sound of its bells, so terrified the horses, which unfortunately happened to be young and skittish, that, taking the bit between their teeth, they drew the coach along with such rapidity, that meeting with two other mules, they overturned them in their course. The women within, seeing a thousand abysses opened under their feet, apprehended their danger, and sent forth most lamentable cries. The coachman and muleteers endeavoured in vain to stop the horses: they were already within fifty paces of the litter, when madam Liancourt, alarmed by the noise, looked out, and screamed aloud; I also turned back, and trembling at the danger in which I saw this lady and her attendants, without being able to assist them on account of the distance I was at, "Ah! friend," said I to La-Font, "the women will be dashed in pieces; what will become of us? and what will the king say?" While I was thus speaking, I pushed my horse forward with all my strength; but this was useless, and I should have arrived too late.

By one of those lucky chances, and which almost amount to a miracle, when the danger was greatest,

greatest, the axle-tree of the little wheels coming out of the nave by a violent shock which broke the pegs, the two wheels fell on each side, and the coach to the ground, and there stopped; one of the hindmost horses was thrown down by the shock, and kept in the other; the fore horses broke their traces, and passed so close to the litter, which was already at the extremity of the precipice, that it is plain if they had drawn the coach along with it, it would have been thrown over it. I stopped them and gave them to my domestics to hold, after which I flew to relieve madam de Liancourt, who was half dead with fear. I went next to the coach, and assisted the women to get out of it: they were for having the coachman hanged, and I was complaisant enough to give him two or three strokes with my cane. At length their terrors being entirely dissipated, and the carriage refitted, we resumed our journey; and till we arrived at Clermont I continued to ride close to madam De Liancourt's litter.

The king had set out for this place to meet his mistress, and arrived there a quarter of an hour after us. I did not fail to inform him immediately of what had happened; and while I was relating this adventure, I observed him attentively, and saw him turn pale and tremble. By these emotions, which I never perceived in him in the greatest dangers, it was easy to guess the violence of his passion for this lady.

The first moments were given to tenderness; after which the king consulted with me concerning the state of his affairs. That which was of most consequence at present, was the advice he had just received, by a letter from Rouen, that the duke of Montpensier, engaged more strictly than ever with the factious courtiers, had formed a very dangerous design against his royal person (this design was not explained); and that he was endeavouring by all sorts of methods, to gain himself dependents. The

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king was so much the more afflicted at this news, as he really loved the duke of Montpensier; and since policy hindered him from marrying his sister to the count of Soissons, or any of the princes of Lorraine, he was accustomed to look upon this prince as his future brother-in-law. He insisted that all other business being postponed for this, I should go immediately to Rouen, and there either prevail upon the duke of Montpensier to return to his duty, or disconcert all his projects.

I staid six days at Rouen, and during that time I had sufficient reason to be convinced that the imputations against this prince were absolutely false, and an artifice of those who sought to throw the government into confusion. The duke of Montpensier, whose sentiments were very different from those they accused him of, suffered nothing to appear either in his actions or discourse, but what proved his strict attachment to the king. Those persons with whom he had had the closest connexions, durst not in his presence avow any principle contrary to his, and had no hope of ever gaining him. One day when he did me the honour to invite me to dine with him, he talked to me of his resolution to continue inviolable in his duty to the king, with a candour and freedom which those who know him are sensible he would not have been capable of had he been conscious of any secret guilt; and although he did not seek to justify himself, yet innocence carries along with it certain silent proofs, which cannot be resisted. He embraced me several times as a man who was dear to him by being faithfully devoted to the king; and on that account promised me his friendship, of which I have since had many instances. I mentioned to him his marriage with the princess Catherine, as an affair in which the king was as solicitous for his success as he himself could be. He confessed to me that he had never desired any thing with so much ardour as the possession of this princess,

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cess, but that he durst not flatter himself with a hope of obtaining her, since he had not qualities, he said, capable of gaining her heart, or of subduing the ascendant the count of Soissons had over him. I remained entirely satisfied with the duke of Montpensier's sentiments, and resolved to give a good account of them to the king. The remainder of the time I staid at Rouen I employed in renewing my former friendships with several persons, among whom were the first president De Boquemare, messieurs De Lahquetot, De Gremonville, De Bourgethroulde, De Berniere, all members of the parliament; the abbots De Tiron, and Martinbault; the sieurs De Motteville, Des Hammeaux, Du Mesnil, captain of the old Palace; De La-Haule, De Meneneourt, Du Mesnil-basil, and others, by whom I was treated, and whom I treated in my turn. I lodged with La-Pile, one of my particular friends.

I found the king still at Amiens*, where a few days after arrived deputies from the principal cities of Provence and Languedoc, whose compliments and harangues his majesty received with his accustomed goodness. The deputy from Marseilles was heard with most pleasure, as he spoke for a city so ancient, and at all times so faithful to its sovereigns.

The king being not only undeceived by my report of the duke of Montpensier, but also more than ever convinced of his affection, resolved to make one effort more in his favour; and unfortunately I was the person whom he fixed upon to discharge this new commission. Having sent for me one night to his bedside, he told me that, under a pretence of visiting the princess Catherine, I

* The deputies of the town of Amiens speaking to him, in their address, of Henry III's goodness; "Yes, says he to them, he was a good prince, but he was afraid

"of you; and for my part I neither fear nor love you." Le Grain, Decade d'Henry le grand. liv. x.

1996. must go and endeavour to prevail upon her to give the duke of Montpensier that place in her heart which the count of Siffons², notwithstanding the sacrifice of the marriage contract, still possessed. After what had happened to me at Chartres upon this occasion, I thought it rashness to embark in an affair in which it was impossible to succeed. I conjured the king not to expose me, by this new attempt, to the eternal hatred of this princess and the count. My intreaties, pressing as they were, had no effect; he answered me only with the proverb, *a good master, a bold servant*; and I had nothing for it but obedience.

My last resource was to demand my commission in writing, that it might secure me against the fate of many courtiers, who have been disgraced for acting with a blind obedience to their master, against persons of that rank; and besides a letter of compliment to the princess, I required a second, in which he should deduce the motives of my journey, the nature of his orders, and the manner, and arguments by which he desired I should enforce them. When I made this proposal, the king, always studious of what concerned his honour, replied, that his greatest enemies never demanded more security than his word. I answered by assuring him that I would never make use of it but at the last extremity; and that if the princess should appear disposed to comply with his desires, provided I could convince her that I acted solely by his authority, this writing would then be necessary. The king yielded to this last argument; and being furnished with this authentic piece, I took the road to Fontainebleau, where the princess then was, extremely perplexed with the part I had undertaken.

² She used to say to such as spoke to her on the king's part: "Above all things, I will have my count." *Matthieu*, tom. II. liv. II. p. 618.

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I staid only a day at Paris, from whence I went to the princess, who expected me with impatience, the king having informed her some days before by Loménie of my intended journey, without explaining the occasion of it. She had flattered herself (for love, if it fears all, hopes all likewise) that I might possibly be come to make the count of Soissons happy; and this thought made me happy also, as long as it lasted, which was the two first days; for those I thought necessary to give to civility and compliments. She altered her behaviour on the third, when she found that I only introduced the subject of her love to declare to her that the count of Soissons had, by his imprudent conduct, incensed the king to such a degree, that she ought no longer to think of making him her husband: for I judged it proper to begin by removing one, before I endeavoured to introduce the other.

Although, in speaking of the count of Soissons, I made use of the gentlest terms my imagination could furnish me with, he had in the princess so ardent a defender, that in her answer she intermingled the harshest epithets, and menaces of depriving me of the king's favour. Astonished at a rage so sudden and violent, I thought of nothing but appeasing her, otherwise my commission would have that moment been at an end. I therefore intreated her to hear me, and began a tedious speech, of which I knew not myself the end; and first I introduced a long and eloquent protestation of my respect, attachment, and earnest desire to serve her; during which I racked my imagination, in vain, to furnish me with the means of calming her mind, since what it was most necessary she should hear, namely the count of Soissons' insolent behaviour to the king, was precisely that which would enrage her the most. I ventured however to break through this difficulty, and conjured her to reflect seriously whether this prince

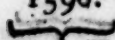
1596. had, by his whole conduct, deserved that the king should be solicitous to raise his fortune. It was the hope only that a discourse, whose beginning was so disagreeable, would end in a manner favourable to her passion, that obliged the princess to give any attention to me; which I judged by those emotions of anger and disdain which overspread her face alternately with blushes and paleness.

I continued to lay before her, with all the moderation imaginable, the many causes of ill-will which the count had given the king, particularly his behaviour in Burgundy, certainly inexcusable even in the eyes of a mistress. I used however the precaution to repeat frequently that, for my own part, I believed the count to be very distant from those sentiments which his conduct gave room to attribute to him: I dwelt upon the consequences it must unavoidably have, at a time when a process was actually commenced against the princess of Condé, by which the prince her son, still a huguenot, lived uncertain of his state, in a kind of banishment at Rochelle. This affair being of the number of those in which justice alone was not sufficient, the friends of the young prince would have found it difficult to have scattered those accusations against the mother, and secured to the son his rank of first prince of the blood and presumptive heir to the crown, if the king, by suppressing the instruments of the process, as he did at last, had not interested himself in the justification of the one, and the defence of the other. I made the princess sensible that the count was master of his own fate, but that he made so bad an use of the king's favourable dispositions towards him, that he would infallibly oblige him to engage in the interests of his rival. In short, I said enough to have made any other think he was greatly to be blamed.

The princess, who during this discourse, had fallen into a reverie, occasioned more by vexation than

than prudent reflections, interrupted me here, to hasten to that conclusion which I had given her a favourable hint of, and which seemed farther off in proportion as I lengthened my speech. But having once begun, she was not sufficiently mistress of herself to stop where she intended; and giving way to the rage that filled her heart, she fell upon me a second time, who, she said, only sought to deceive her, and upon the king her brother, "who loves me so much," said she ironically, "that he cannot resolve to get rid of me;" and as a proof entered into a long enumeration of her lovers; amongst whom it would have been easy to prove that she had missed of an establishment through her own fault, as when she refused the king of Scotland. In the course of her complaints she neither spared the queen her mother, nor king Henry III. who, she said, had all conspired to keep her single. Her stock of rancour being almost exhausted by so many invectives, the softer passion took its place, and naturally turned her thoughts on the count of Soissons; a subject which she treated not less amply, but in a manner very different from the former.

At length, recollecting that her design by interrupting me, was to hear that advice by which, I told her; all past errors might be repaired, she asked me positively what that advice was, but with the same tone of malignant raillery; by which I was still better convinced that her mind was irritated beyond the power of human eloquence to cure: but pressed by the question, I replied, "By the count of Soissons doing the very contrary of what he has hitherto done." The observations I made while I pronounced these few words, were sufficient to persuade me, that it would be to no purpose to propose the duke of Montpensier to her; I therefore looked upon my commission to be at an end, or rather absolutely useless, and all I aimed at now was to draw myself out of this embarrassment by expressions so vague and general, that the prin-

1596.  cess might not take any advantage of me; nor afterwards maintain that I had failed in my promise to her. Nothing is more easy than this kind of discourse. I entered at first upon the necessary duties of crowned heads, and expatiated long upon this subject; from whence, however, I drew no other inference, but that the king could not be reproached with any failure of his. This introduced another set discourse, divided into several parts, wherein Henry's gentleness of disposition was not slightly discussed; and to conclude by something still clearer, since the princess, contrary to my expectations, had patience enough to listen to so tedious an harangue, I assured her, in few words, that Henry's temper was such, that I was confident he would be easily prevailed upon to consent to every thing that was reasonable.

The princess, surprised at so precipitate a conclusion, asked me, indeed with some appearance of reason, if I had nothing more to say to her; for it is certain, that I had gone a great way about to little purpose: I replied, that I had still a great many things to add. This long conversation having lasted till night, I depended upon having wearied the princess so much, that she would take an absolute leave of me: but I was mistaken; she gave me only till the next day to satisfy her demands, and left me with a sullen and malignant air, accompanied with a glance, and some interjections, which I heard as I went out, upon the part I had played at Chartres; from whence I drew a very unfavourable presage.

I should have been the most presumptuous of all men, if, after this, I could have flattered myself with being able to bring her to the point we desired. Indeed I was so far from entertaining such a thought, that I should have been rejoiced, if the princess, in quitting me, had commanded me never to appear before her again. I went however to wait upon her at the appointed hour, which was after she had dined. She had repaired to her cabinet earlier than usual,

usual, and continued there shut up conferring with the ladies De Rohan, de La-Guiche, de La-Barre, and De Neufvy, from none of whom I had the least reason to expect any good offices. I waited in her chamber, talking to the ladies De Gratiens, and Pangeac, and two other young ladies, who were as much inclined to favour me as the others to do the contrary. I told them, that I should not have been sorry, if they had been in the princess's cabinet instead of those ladies that were then with her, who, I was persuaded, were that very moment giving her very bad advice. They told me I ought not to imagine so, but in a tone that confirmed me in my opinion.

It was an hour at least, before the princess came out; she had been all this time preparing herself, and, perceiving me, told me that she was going to give me her answer; the purport of which it was not difficult to guess, by the cold yet contemptuous air with which she pronounced those words. I followed her, in great uneasiness; but she spared me the pain of speaking first, by telling me that she acquitted me of all I had promised to inform her of, and that now I had nothing to do but to hear her in my turn: then assuming an air still more haughty and contemptuous, she treated me in the presence of all those witnesses (I am obliged to confess it) like the basest of men, who, she said, took upon myself the character of a person of importance, and an able politician, while, in reality, I was a vile and infamous parasite, who had endeavoured to extort from her own mouth a confession of faults, which neither she nor the count had ever been guilty of, to make my court to the king, who was himself ashamed of the part I had acted. The princess could not here avoid falling into the female fault of betraying, by an exuberance of words, the reserve she had resolved to maintain. Something which I had said the evening before, relating to her conduct and that of the count of Soissons in Bearn,

1596. occurring to her memory, she entered into an unreasonable justification of it. Pangeac was called a great loggerhead, who had not yet received his deserts; my comment upon the duties of kings was found highly unbecoming: then recalling herself from this rambling strain, she told me, that, to close all with a few words, and to hinder me from boasting of my commission, she gave me to understand, that I was rash and imprudent to the last degree, to concern myself with the affairs of a person so far above me; I, that was only a private gentleman, whose highest honour it had been to be brought up in her family, and who, as well as all my relations, had subsisted only upon the bounty of the princes of Navarre; that the fate of all those who, like me, ungrateful for past benefits, durst presume to interfere betwixt persons so nearly united, was to be sacrificed sooner or later, without the honour of having my interposition known to be the cause. From a woman these expressions might be endured; but, as the princess was well assured that no man whatever, not even the count of Soissons, although a prince of the blood, durst treat me in the same manner, she added, as the highest affront she could think of, that all she had said was in the count's name as well as her own. The conclusion of this speech was of a piece with all the rest; she threatened, with an excess of rage, to ruin me for ever with the king, by a single word, and forbid me, for the future, to appear in any place where she was.

I do not believe any distinction of rank or sex can authorise the use of terms so outrageous: certainly it cannot be vanity in me to repeat them; but, as the princess added endeavours to words, and obliged me to take measures for my own defence, in which, for the first time, I waved that submission which I owed to a princess, the sister of my king, I cannot better prove the necessity I was under to take such steps, than by faithfully relating those conversations,

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tions, and even the very words that were made use of. Although my pride suffered greatly by this shameful treatment, I had discretion and even policy enough, not to suffer it to appear; I say policy, for had my countenance expressed the least emotion, or my reply the least bitterness, the princess, without hearing me, would have left me in a triumph which it was necessary I should lessen before those persons who either took part in, or were witnesses of it.

I began therefore with the false timidity of a man who is solicitous to disculpate himself; and that I might engage the princess to hear all I had to say, I told her that I was very much grieved, to find that the prejudices she had conceived made her discover a meaning in my words that I had no intention to give them, and had drawn upon me a treatment I could not possibly deserve; that it was easy for me to convince her how little I merited those reproaches she had cast upon me; and to begin with the count of Soissons, she knew that in all I had said relating to him, I had added that, for my own part, I was absolutely convinced of the rectitude of his intentions. By this introduction, I stopped the princess, who supposed she should soon have the pleasure to see me imploring pardon at her feet.

I went on with the same composure to tell her, that to remove the displeasure she seemed to entertain, that a private gentleman, and one unworthy to approach her, should be sent to treat with her, I begged leave to remind her that although, by the prodigality of my ancestors, I was neither possessed of the estate nor dignities to which I had a claim, yet, however, more than a hundred thousand crowns had been carried by the daughters of my family, into the houses of Bourbon and Austria* ; and

* I refer the reader to the explanation I have given in the beginning of these Memoirs, about the alliances of the house of Be-thune.

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1596. that, far from being a charge to the king since I had been in his service, his majesty had sometimes given me the pleasure to see him have recourse to me in his necessities. I acknowledged, however, that nothing could justify my having exceeded his orders, if I had really been capable of doing so. That moment, taking another paper of the king's out of my pocket, addressed to the princess, in form of a letter, I took advantage of the astonishment into which I had cast her, to tell her, that to finish my message before I quitted her for ever, I declared to her, as her servant, that his majesty holding the place of her father, and being likewise her master and her king, she had no other part to take than submission to his will; that without listening to any thing the count of Soissons could suggest, she must resolve either to accept of a husband from the king her brother, or incur the loss of his favour; that in this last case, it would be a very sensible mortification to her, after having held the rank of a queen, to see herself reduced to a very inconsiderable fortune, since she was not ignorant, that besides the presents the king had bestowed, in the resignation he made her of those estates she at present enjoyed, he had consulted rather the dictates of his own heart than the laws and customs of Navarre, which would have appointed a very small provision for her.

These last words drew the princess, in spite of herself, out of that scornful insensibility she had affected to shew, to enter into the greatest transport of rage that any woman could be capable of. After giving vent to all that anger could inspire, she went furiously into her cabinet, and I withdrew, with great composure, towards the staircase, whither madam de Neufvy came running after me, to tell me, that the princess had sent her to demand the letter I had shewn her. This was a new stratagem of those four ladies, who had persuaded the princess, that she would ruin me more effectually with
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the king, if she could make it appear that I had sacrificed his majesty's letter. I perceived the snare that was laid for me, and I replied to madam de Neufvy, that I was surprised the princess, after having refused to hear the contents of the letter, should send immediately to demand it. I added, that I would communicate it only to the princess, and read it to her, having occasion for it myself. This was not what the messenger wanted, and she returned without making me any answer.

I went that evening to Moret, where my wife then was, and staying with her only one day, set out the next for Paris, to meet my courier, whom I had sent from Fontainebleau with dispatches to the king. But I was greatly surprised when, instead of him, I saw young Boëlle, the princess's steward of the household, arrive with a letter, at which I was still more surprised, when I saw it was from the king. I knew that Boëlle was the person whom she sent with her dispatches to his majesty. I found that this letter had been sent open to the princess, and had not been transmitted to me till it had passed through her hands, and that she had sealed it with her own seal: all these circumstances left me no room to doubt of my misfortune, which by a sad foreboding in my mind was still more confirmed, and I opened the letter trembling. My fears were but too just; instead of praises, and those expressions of esteem and confidence with which the king's letters to me were generally filled, my eyes were struck with a severe command to make the princess satisfaction. His majesty "could not suffer (these were his words) that one of his subjects should affront a princess, and his sister, without punishing him immediately for his fault, if he did not repair it by submission."

I was overwhelmed, I confess, with this unexpected blow, and so much the more, as, having no reason to imagine that the king had not received my letter, I saw that it was after he had read it that

I was

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I was thus treated. What reflections did I not then make upon the misfortune of being employed in settling the differences of persons of such rank, and the danger of serving kings. I had nothing to reproach myself with, in regard to Henry; I had served him four and twenty years with an unwearied assiduity, and a zeal that nothing could allay: it was with reluctance that I accepted this last disagreeable commission: the writing which I had obtained of the king contained many things much more severe than any I had said to the princess; and I had suppressed them at a time when it would, perhaps, have been excusable to have aggravated them. My guilt was, at most, a too faithful obedience; yet his majesty sacrificed me cruelly, without any regard to my reasons, or his own express commands. I was sensibly affected with this injustice, and all my thoughts ran upon forming strong resolutions to quit the court for ever.

But scarce had I taken these resolutions when a thousand motives concurred to make me change them. Henry, as I had already often proved, had acquired such an empire over my will, that after repeated oaths on my side to quit him, a single word from him has drawn me to him as it were by enchantment. To this was added the consideration of my own interest: by listening to my resentment I was exposing myself to lose the rewards of my long services, when I was just upon the point of obtaining them, and at a time when, being disinherited by the viscount de Gand, I lost an estate of fifty thousand livres a year; exhausted by a long and painful service, having a house to establish, and menaced with a numerous family by the fertility of my wife, these expected rewards were all my resource, and the only foundation I had to build upon. But, on the other side, how could I endure to suffer, like a criminal, the haughty and contemptuous behaviour of a princess, with whom I had just before maintained a character so different, and who

who would make this cup as bitter for me as she was able? The agitation and grief of my mind may be easily imagined. 1596.

I at length took the most prudent part I could, but it was far from suspending the uneasiness that preyed upon my spirits; I feigned sickness, and the deep melancholy with which I was seized was in reality capable of communicating to my body part of the disorder of my mind. I discovered to no person whatever the cause of my grief, but sent for a physician, who making me tremble for the consequences of a disease entirely of my own framing, promised, however, to restore me health by the force of bleeding and purges.

At four o'clock in the afternoon another physician arrived, for whom the cure of my distemper was reserved; this was Picaut, my courier, whom I had waited for impatiently, to take, upon the accounts he should bring me, my last resolutions. After informing me that he had had the misfortune to strain his ankle, which was the cause that the princess's courier came to the king before him, he presented me with a letter, in this prince's own hand-writing, which removed all my complaints: Henry told me in it, that I had reason to be offended with the contents of his former letter, which he had written in one of those sudden transports that I knew were natural to him, and upon exaggerated complaints, joined to the instances and importunities of his sister; but that, to calm my uneasiness, he assured me he would disavow nothing I had said, in which if he failed, he would permit me to make use of his own letter against him: he concluded with these words, "Come to me, that you may inform me more particularly of all that has passed, and depend upon being as well received by me as you have ever been, let who will be angry at it. Adieu, my friend."

In this kind familiarity I knew again my old master. This letter was dated the 17th of May, and

1596. and the first the 15th, and both from Amiens, for which place I set out very early in the morning, and arrived there the next day. I neither suppressed nor palliated any part of what had been said or done at Fontainebleau between the princess and me; and his majesty, by repeated expressions of friendship and esteem for me, shewed that he approved of my whole conduct.

That I may not too often interrupt the course of my history by a recital which is equally proper every where, I shall finish, in a few words, all that concerns this affair. La Varenne, who was employed by the princess to take care of her interests at the court, did not fail to inform her of the good reception the king gave me, and the report that was every where spread, that the finances would be wholly confided to my care. The princess comprehended, by this news, that it was now necessary not only to renounce her vengeance, but also to be upon good terms, for the future, with a man from whose hands henceforwards all the appointments for the support of her household would proceed. Whether she was convinced that she herself was wrong, or still imputed the blame to me, she had the generosity to pardon me: and I must confess, to the honour of this princess, that in this she shewed a greatness of soul of which few persons could have been capable. If in those qualities which marked the character of this princess, we except an excess of vivacity which it was not in her power to restrain, and to which, in the affair above mentioned, was added the force of the most impetuous of all passions, her disposition will be found naturally good and easy, capable even of the refinements of friendship, and the warmth of gratitude.

She communicated this alteration of her sentiments with regard to me to madam de Pangeac, one of my friends; and even made the first advances to madam de Rosny. I had left her in childhood at Moret. When her health was perfectly re-established,

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ed, she went one day to church at Fontainebleau, and returned without waiting upon the princess, under pretence of a slight indisposition which confined her to her bed. Madam de Pangeac making her some reproaches, as if from herself, but in reality by the princess's orders, my wife found herself obliged to tell her, that the terms I was upon with the princess made it impossible for her to do herself that honour. At a second journey which madam de Rosny made to Fontainebleau, the princess caused her to be told, that the reasons she had given madam de Pangeac ought not to prevent her coming to see her. Accordingly, my wife waited upon her, and had a most gracious reception. She confessed to her sincerely, that she was not yet entirely satisfied with my conduct, as she thought she had reason to expect a very different one, considering those instances of friendship which I had received from her in my youth: she mentioned several parties of pleasure at Pau, or at M. de Mioffens*, where she had done me the honour to take me with her, particularly that when running at the ring I gained the prize, which was a jewel of small value, and was going to receive it from her hand, she changed the jewel, and gave me one in its stead worth two thousand crowns. She did not forget to mention, that my father had often carried the queen, her mother, in his arms. After all this, the princess very obligingly told my wife, that her resentment against me had never extended to her, whose disposition she loved. She said a thousand obliging things of M. de Saint-Martin, my wife's uncle, who had been first gentleman of the bedchamber to the king; and of madam de Saint-Martin, the sister of M. de Mioffens, and consequently a near relation of her own.

Madam de Rosny left her extremely well satisfied, and fully determined to use her utmost endeavours to restore me to her favour. She made no attempts

* Henry d'Albret, baron de Mioffens.

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this first visit, but afterwards, observing to the princess the attention I shewed in settling the assignments for the payment of the offices of her household; and representing to her, that it was by repeated orders from his majesty that I had subdued the reluctance I had to accept of that commission which had offended her, Madam de la Force, who was then at the princess's toilet, joined my wife; and what surpris'd me greatly, being supported by the ladies de Rohan and de la Barre, they prevail'd upon her to send for me that moment. From the time that the princess was convinced of my innocence, she had so great a degree of friendship for me as to confide all her secrets to me alone: she propos'd and promoted with all her interest the marriage of my eldest daughter with the duke of Rohan, her nearest relation * on the side of the deceased queen her mother, and the heir of her estate in Navarre. The king did not then approve of this match, though he did afterwards. And lastly, when this princess set out for Lorraine, sufficiently discontented, as it is well known, with the court of France, she declared publicly, that there were only three persons in it whom she esteem'd, and that I was one of them.

Hostilities between the king's party and that of the league continued, during the years 1595 and 1596, in the same parts of the kingdom as in the preceding years: in Brittany, between messieurs d'Aumont and de Saint-Luc, and the duke of Mercœur; and in the provinces in the south of France, where several little skirmishes happened between messieurs de Ventadour, de la Rochefoucaut, de Châteauneuf, de Saint-Angel, de Lostange, de Chambaret, and other officers on the king's

* Henry II. of that name, duke de Rohan, &c. who married Margaret de Bethune, as shall be seen in the sequel of these Memoirs, was grandson to René I. of that name,

viscount de Rohan, and Isabella D'Albret, daughter to John king of Navarre. See in all the genealogists the other alliances of this illustrious house with that of France.

side;

side *; and messieurs de Pompadour, de Rastignac, de Saint Chamant, de Montpésat, de La-Chapelle Biron, and other leaguers. The defeat of the Crocans, the siege of Blaye, the sacking of Agen, and the death of the duke of Rochefoucaut, are the most remarkable events † that happened in the Limosin and the adjacent places. Lesdiguières continued the war with equal success in Dauphiné, Provence, and Piedmont; sometimes against the duke of Savoy, and sometimes against the duke of Epemnon. The conclusion of all these expeditions was the entire defeat of the duke of Savoy, who, thinking to derive some advantages from the disunion of the dukes of Guise and Epemnon, had marched as far as Provence, from whence he was shamefully driven back; and likewise that of the duke of Epemnon, who yielding to his rival the duke of Guise, assisted

* Anne de Levis, duke of Ventadour, governor of Limosin, and lieutenant-general for the king in Languedoc: he died in 1622. Francis de la Rochefoucaut, prince of Marillac. René de Saint-Marthe, sieur de Chateauneuf. Charles de Rochefort de Saint-Angel. Lewis Francis de Lofange, or Loustange. N. de Chambaret, otherwise called Chambert, governor of Limosin. Lewis viscount Pompadour. N. de Rastignac. John de Saint-Chamant, or Antony his brother. They afterwards were all of the king's party. Henry Des-Pres de Montpezat. N. de Charbonniere, sieur de la Chapelle Biron.

† Most of the events which the author mentions here, happened before the year 1595. The count de Rochefoucaut had been dead since the year 1591, having been killed, as we said before, at the battle of Saint-Yrier-la-perche. The viscount de Pompadour was likewise dead in 1591. The taking of Agen by the count de la Roche, son to marechal de Matignon, was likewise in the same year 1591. Blaye was besieged in the year 1593, by the same marechal,

who, notwithstanding the defeat of a Spanish squadron, was obliged to raise the siege. The Crocans, so called from Croc; a village in the Limosin, where they began to assemble themselves, were also defeated about the same time by Chambert, or Chambaret, the governor of that province: and afterwards, the marechal de Matignon completed their final dispersion and overthrow in Languedoc, more by stratagem than by open force. Consult, as to all these events, the historians above quoted; as also see, in the particular history of the constable de Lesdiguières, the expeditions of this hero, famous for the victories at Epemnon, Pontcharra, Vinon, &c. and for the taking of the fort d'Exiles, of Cahors, and of a great number of other places; whereby he became master of all Savoy, and a part of Piedmont.

Besides a war, France was sore afflicted this year 1596, with a plague and famine, which were occasioned by the utter inversion of the seasons; for l'Etoile says, that there was a summer in April, an autumn in May, and a winter in June.

1596. by the same Lesdiguières, d'Ornano, and the countess of Sault's party, was left without any resource, and reduced to the necessity of imploring the king's clemency, by letters conceived in terms of the utmost submission, which his majesty received at Gaillon. His letters were very soon after followed by himself; he came and threw himself at the king's feet, which was a kind of triumph for Henry, this duke's humiliation, with that of Bouillon, and de la Tremouille, being amongst the number of those things he most earnestly desired.

During his stay at Amiens, the king took several new measures to facilitate my being joined in the council of finances. This prince, who by an effect of the native rectitude of his own mind, could not believe it possible for men to be as corrupt as they really were; and by the sweetness of his disposition incapable of proceeding to extremities till he had tried all other methods, had for a long time imagined, that he should at length bring this body to manage the revenue of the state with wisdom and œconomy; and this important reformation was not so difficult, but that it might be produced by the advice of one man of industry and integrity, whom he would associate with those that composed it. With this view, he spoke both in public and private to messieurs of the council to receive me amongst them: however great their reluctance was, they durst not openly reject a proposition, which being made in this manner, resembled rather an intreaty than a command.

I confess sincerely, that I was not so easily brought to yield to this medium. His majesty, in a private conversation, told me it was his desire I should endeavour to gain the good-will of messieurs of the council, and by some instances of complaisance, remove the suspicions they had entertained, that if I joined their society it would be only to do them bad offices; so that I might engage them by my behaviour to make it their own request that I should be associated amongst them. I did not hesitate a mo-

ment in replying, that this appeared to me to be the worst way imaginable of being introduced into the council of the finances, to owe it as an obligation to those who governed them; and knowing so well as I did the dispositions of this society, I could not serve them and the state at the same time. The king, who did not like to be contradicted, and who likewise remembered my disputes with the duke of Nevers, supposed I had still some remains of resentment against those gentlemen, and thought he perceived a kind of haughtiness in my answer, and a tenaciousness of my own opinion, told me, with some quickness, that he had no desire to irritate every one upon my account; therefore, without making any more attempts to bring me into the finances, he would seek for some other employment for me, since he knew I could not continue in a state of inactivity.

He had still some remains of displeasure in his countenance when he quitted me to visit madam de Liancourt, who enquiring the cause, represented to him, that he would never be served with fidelity till he found a man who, from a regard only to the public good, would not fear to draw upon himself the hatred of the financiers. As for me, I looked upon my engaging in the finances as farther off than ever; and reflecting that my employment would henceforwards be reduced to treaties and negotiations, an office which seldom fails to bring certain ruin upon any man who would maintain his rank in it with dignity, and his reputation with honour, I resolved to explain myself to his majesty, and prevail upon him to approve of a scheme that would at least secure to me the reimbursement of all my expences. But Henry did not give me time to make this proposal to him: when I approached he told me, that upon the representation madam de Liancourt had made him, he was now brought over to my opinion, and that without any longer delay, he was going to declare his intentions publicly, after

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having, for form's sake, imparted them first to the constable and Villeroi, to whom it belonged to dispatch my patents. These two gentlemen came very seasonably into the king's apartment, and received this order; the constable by a bow, and Villeroi by saying, he would give me the patents as soon as he could meet with a precedent of the proper form.

In the afternoon, when the king was gone to hunt, I went to make my acknowledgements to the marchioness de Monceaux (for this was the title that madam de Liancourt had lately taken); after which I thought I was obliged, in civility, to visit monsieur de Villeroi, of whom, instead of the patents, I asked for a warrant, which would have answered the same purpose. Villeroi made an evasive reply, and during three or four days that I pressed him, always deferred the affair on various pretences till the next day. At last, the king left Amiens to go to Monceaux, and passed by Liancourt, where Liancourt, his first equerry, received and treated him very splendidly. It was in this place that they determined to use their utmost efforts against me.

Liancourt, at Villeroi's solicitation, invited the chancellor, who was his intimate friend, and the other members of the council, who came to that place by the king's order, to stay at his house during the king's residence there. They took advantage of this opportunity, of being always near the king, to labour effectually for my exclusion from the council. The method they made use of was not to attack me directly, but to insinuate to the king, that I was not fit for this employment, in which, they said, for want of that experience which only a long habitude can give, it would not be possible to avoid committing a thousand faults, the least of which was able to ruin, without resource, the credit, and consequently bring on the destruction of, the state. These discourses were so often repeated, in the king's presence (for they designedly turned the conversation upon that subject) and with

so great an appearance of sincerity, that the king was at last shaken by them, and when at the same time he found these gentlemen could with such facility form the greatest projects, discourse with such clearness upon the strength and interests of the state, calculate the revenues of it with the utmost exactness, in a word, were possessed in appearance of the whole science of commerce in its full extent, and of every other method by which a state is rendered flourishing; and especially that they conversed with each other in a language hardly intelligible to any but themselves; and, influenced still more by the long preparation which they represented as absolutely necessary before any one could be received into the council, he thought that the present bad state of the finances was not the greatest misfortune with which they were threatned. His majesty likewise, looking upon all this as a proof of their repentance, and from the apprehensions he had just given them expecting to see a very great alteration in their conduct, no longer entertained a design of associating me amongst them.

Villeroi, who during this time continued at Amiens, yet was not the less informed of all the measures taken by a body whom he directed as he pleased, seized this opportunity to send my patents to the king, which he could not dispense with himself from dispatching, after the express orders he had received from his majesty. When they were transmitted to the king, he had left Liancourt, having staid there only a day, and was then at Monceaux, where, still under the influence of these suggestions, he gave them to Beringhen, telling him to keep them without saying any thing to me, till he had orders to the contrary. Beringhen, who was one of my friends, discovered the secret to me, which I kept faithfully. Fifteen days passed in this manner. The king did not speak to Beringhen about my patents, and messieurs of the council, blinded by their success, instead of that sincere repentance

1596. which his majesty expected from them, gave him new proofs of their artifice and insincerity, and such gross ones, that they forced him to crush them with the blow which they might, without much difficulty, have avoided.

The king discovered that the council had just farmed out the subsidies of Normandy for thirty thousand crowns, and to defraud the treasury of this sum, so much less than the true value of the revenues, they had applied it all to the discharging the old demands upon it. With a little attention, he convinced himself of other faults in their conduct; that the five large farms did not produce the fourth part of their value, because Zamet, Gondy, and other farmers of the king's revenues, who were employed in them, being connived at by the gentlemen of the council, divided with them the immense profits that accrued from those farms. The avarice of these people was not yet sated, and, under pretence of the losses at Calais, Cambray, Ardres, &c. they allowed such drawbacks upon all the other parts of the king's revenues, that, instead of increasing, they grew perceptibly less. The king, amidst that just indignation which this knowledge inspired, sent for me, and commanded me to go to Paris, to enquire from whence so great a dissipation of the money proceeded, which could only take its rise from the council. I replied, that his majesty having, without doubt, revoked the order he had given to Villeroy, to dispatch my patents, since I had not received them, I had no right to mix with the council, or to meddle with the affairs transacted by it. "How!" said Henry, concealing his consciousness of this reproach, "then Beringhen has not given you your patents, and a letter from Villeroy, which he has had these fifteen days: you see this heavy German would have forgot them." While, by the king's orders, I went to make preparations for my journey, that I might reach Claye that evening, his majesty spoke to Beringhen,

ringhen, who consented to take all the blame upon himself. During this interval, a thought came into my head, which I communicated to the king when I returned to receive his last orders. I told him, that I thought it would be necessary for me to go, before the day appointed for the opening of the states, to some of the principal districts of the kingdom, to procure there a more certain account of the present state of his majesty's revenues, the diminution they had suffered, and the augmentations they would admit of, to the end that his majesty might regulate his demands upon the states according to this scheme, which, however imperfect, might still, in proportion, throw some light upon the strength of the more distant districts, and consequently upon the whole kingdom: that, besides this advantage, I did not despair of procuring for him, in those districts only which I should visit, the three or four hundred thousand crowns which he had demanded in vain of the council. I thought it would be useless, and even imprudent, to take upon myself to make this examination, without such an instrument as appeared to me to be the most effectual means to prevent my being deceived, which was a full power from the king to suspend the contumacious receivers and overseers from the exercise of their office, or even to discard them entirely, and to reward the integrity of those who had been zealous for his majesty's service.

Henry approved of the essential part of this scheme, but altered something of the manner in which it was to be proposed to the council. He was of opinion that I should take such measures in offering this advice to them, that those who most valued themselves upon the strength of their genius, such as Sancy, Schomberg, Fresne, and La Grange-leroi, might seize the hint first themselves, and so pass, at least in part, for the authors of it; and likewise, that each one in the company might flatter himself that this commission would be given to him,

or

1596. or through his means, to the intendants and masters of requests who were wholly at his devotion. Nothing could be more prudent than this medium, which gratified alike the vanity of some, and the avarice of all. Accordingly I took my place in the council, where, by a miracle, to be found only in courts, my colleagues, who inwardly pined with vexation, suffered nothing but joy to appear in their countenances, words, and behaviour. I was almost deceived myself by that profusion of praises with which the chancellor loaded me, and the manner in which he told me I had been expected by them with the utmost impatience: such is the art of courtiers; they settle it amongst themselves, that however grossly they play the counterfeit, they shall not laugh at each other.

The treaty with the duke of Maienne, which had been agreed upon some time before, was concluded during the king's stay at Monceaux. When the king was at Amiens, the duke had sent a man to him, named D'Estienne, to know what place would be agreeable to his majesty, for him to come and pay him his respects, and the king appointed Monceaux, in consideration of the duke's indisposition, which would not permit him to make longer journeys than from Amiens to Soissons, where he resided *. The king was walking in his park, attended only by me, and holding my hand, when the duke of Maienne arrived, who put one knee to the ground, with the lowest submissions, and added to a promise of inviolable fidelity his acknowledgments to his majesty for having forced him, he said, from the arrogance of the Spaniards, and the subtilty of the Italians. Henry, who, as soon as he saw him approach, had advanced to meet him, embraced him thrice, and, forcing him to rise, em-

* L'Etoile tells the story otherwise: but in this the duke de Sully is more to be depended upon. Preface has likewise been mistaken in placing this interview in 1595. See the Chronol. Novenn. liv. viii. p. 599.

braced him again with that goodness which he never withheld from a subject that returned to his duty; then taking his hand, he made him walk with him in his park, conversing with him familiarly upon the embellishments he designed to make in it. The king walked so fast, that the duke of Maienne, equally fatigued by his sciatica, his fat, and the heat of the weather, suffered great torments without daring to complain. The king perceiving it, by the duke's being red and in a sweat, whispered me, "If I walk longer, said he, with this corpulent body, I shall revenge myself upon him, without any great difficulty, for all the mischiefs he has done us." Then turning to the duke of Maienne, "Tell me truly, cousin," pursued he, "do I not walk a little too fast for you." The duke replied, that he was almost stifled; and that, if his majesty walked but a very little while longer, he would kill him without designing it. "Hold there, cousin," replied the king with a smile, embracing him again, and lightly tapping his shoulder, "for this is all the vengeance you will ever receive from me." The duke of Maienne, sensibly affected with this frank behaviour, attempted to kneel and kiss the hand his majesty gave him; and protested that he would henceforwards serve him even against his own children. "I believe it," said Henry; "and that you may love and serve me a long time, go to the castle and rest and refresh yourself, for you have much need of it. I will give you a couple of bottles of Arbois wine, for I know you do not hate it: here is Rosny, whom I resign to accompany you; he shall do the honours of my house, and attend you to your chamber; he is one of my oldest servants, and one of those who is most rejoiced at your resolving to serve, and love me affectionately." The king continuing his walk, left me with the duke of Maienne, whom I conducted to a summer-house to repose himself, and afterwards attended him to his horse,

1596. horse, as much satisfied with the king and I as we were both with him.

The king thought Monceaux so agreeable a place, that he staid there longer than he had at first intended: he sent for the constable and Villeroi from Amiens, and ordered the council of the finances to reside at Meaux, for the conveniency of receiving his commands. I had not yet proposed in it my scheme of visiting the districts. His majesty, being convinced that it must have good consequences, took upon himself the care of proposing it. At the first hint he gave of it, the counsellors, who thought none but themselves could be designed for this employment, and each of whom was attentive to his own particular interest, without prejudicing that of the society in general, approved of the design; but were greatly surprised, when they found that, amongst them all, the king only named La-Grange-le-roi for this purpose, and appointed him two districts: his majesty filled up the other commissions with the names of messieurs De Caumartin * and Bizouze, for two districts each; and with those of the other two masters of requests, for one district each: four of the chief and most extensive ones were assigned to me. The gentlemen of the council began now to repent that they had not hindered the execution of a plan, which would produce a full proof of their injustice: they united their utmost endeavours to render it useless, or at least to traverse it as much as possible. Their malice was all directed against me; for by the confidence the king placed in me, and the part I had acted in this affair, they guessed the truth. I was accused of ignorance, rashness, and obstinacy, and other faults still more glaring; and had no sooner begun to ex-

* Louis le Fevre, seigneur de Caumartin, was sent into the Liconnois, Berry, and Auvergne: we shall speak of him hereafter. He was keeper of the seals in 1622, after the death of M. De Vic, and

died the following year, in the seventy-second year of his age. He had the same elogiums given him by historians as M. Sully bestows on him in the sequel.

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ercise the duties of my employment, than I perceived that, by an effect of their foresight, they had taken all the necessary measures with the treasurers of France, the receivers general and particular, comptrollers, clerks, and the lowest officers in the revenue. These people, almost all of whom had either sold, or blindly devoted themselves to their wills, were ready to do whatever was required of them; some absented themselves, and left their offices shut up; others presented me with a state of their accounts, drawn up with all that art which may be expected from men who make a science of roguery: others contented themselves with shewing me the orders of messieurs De Fresne, D'Incarville, and Des Barreaux, by which they were forbid to communicate their registers and accounts to any person whatever.

To this excess of malice I at first opposed only patience and gentleness. I exhorted, I endeavoured to persuade, upon the principles of honour and justice, persons who were strangers to both: afterwards, I caused a report to be spread, that the design of assembling the states of the kingdom was to suppress that great number of offices and clerkships, especially the treasury, the least useful of all the societies, yet the most difficult to manage; and that none were to be continued in their places but those who made themselves worthy of that distinction, by a sincerity which, on this occasion, would prove their regard to the public good. This threat producing no effect upon persons who were secretly supported by the council itself, I was obliged to make use of the power I had received, and interdicted most of these dangerous officers, causing the duties of their employment to be exercised by two out of each body, whom I chose amongst all those that appeared to have the best principles. By these means I made myself master of all the registers and accounts, which served me for a clue to enter that labyrinth of impositions and robberies.

What

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What a scene had I there before me ! It would be vain to attempt an account of the tricks and subtilties of this mischievous trade, or an enumeration of concealments, forgeries, misrepresentations, and productions of the same evidences, to serve different purposes ; not to mention the contrivance of an artificial confusion, through which those wretches see with great clearness, though, to every other eye, all is darkness and inextricable perplexity. I content myself with remarking that, by clearing only two old accounts, and bringing together the receipts and letters of exchange of the year current, and the year preceding, I easily collected more than five hundred thousand crowns, which was lost to the king. It may be judged what a sum would have been raised, if, from all those who were thus employed, a rigorous restitution had been demanded of all that they fraudulently gained in so long a course of dishonesty, out of the different sums that had passed their fingers, since only from assignments for old debts, arrears of long standing, and orders payable to the bearer, so much money was recovered. My partners were not as fortunate or as exact as myself ; all, except Caumartin, who brought the king two hundred thousand livres, paid his majesty only in long memorials of improvements to be made in the farming his revenues ; yet the king had chosen these persons with the greatest care. But it is not surprising that they should act in this manner, for to dare the hatred of a society so powerful as that of the financiers in France, to be proof against the presents and allurements, against the turns and artifices of all their dependents, the greatest part of whom do not want understanding, and make use of it only to dazzle, corrupt, and deceive, requires a degree of courage and fortitude of which few persons are capable.

Mean time the gentlemen of the council, who had intelligence of all my proceedings in the provinces, were in a situation that may be easily imagined :

gined: unless they found means to render all my endeavours useles, or to ruin me before my return, their reputation and interest would be entirely lost. My absence afforded them all the conveniency they could wish for to prosecute this design; every thing that malice could suggest was said and done, by them and their emissaries, to prejudice the king against me: they never mentioned me but as a tyrant, who drained the people of all their substance, by the most cruel extortions, without procuring any advantage to the king; since the sums with which I took such pains to fill his treasury, being designed for the payment of pensions to the princes of the blood, and salaries of the great officers of the crown, they would be only placed in his coffers, to be taken out again immediately. Notwithstanding the invectives and impostures of this dreadful cabal, none of whose practices against me I was unacquainted with, I continued to perform my duty; and they had no other effect than to increase my diligence in the execution of my plan, and my precaution in taking such measures as would effectually put a stop to their accusations.

Henry, who had at first given no credit to their reports, beginning afterwards to apprehend some bad consequences from my inexperience in those affairs, desired me, in his letters, to return as soon as possible: but, at length, when my enemies had made their party so strong, that there was a general outcry against me at court, the king was prevailed upon to believe that I should use the power I was possessed of with a severity that would make even him odious to the people; and then, instead of an invitation, I received an absolute order to return to Paris. I obeyed without murmuring, though greatly concerned to be thus stopped in the midst of my endeavours for his service. I caused the accounts of my four districts to be immediately drawn up, and signed by eight receivers-general; and not having time to convert the fifteen hundred thousand

crowns

1596. crowns I had raised into a less bulky coin, I loaded seventy carts with them, making the eight receivers-general accompany them, under the guard of a provost and thirty of the marshal-seamen, who conducted them to Rouen, where the king then was, on account of the opening of the states.

Of all the slanders which had been invented by the gentlemen of the council, to procure my disgrace, none seemed to them so specious as to make the king believe, that I had filled the prisons with the officers and clerks of his finances; to which they thought fit to add that, through an insolent vanity, I brought along fifty of the principal ones bound in my train. The king, who suspected no falshood in so positive a charge, received me, when on my arrival at Rouen I went to pay him my respects, with an air that convinced me my enemies had been very active in their endeavours to hurt me. He did me the honour indeed to embrace me, but with a coldness and reserve which were not usual with him. He asked me why I had given myself the useless trouble of bringing money along with me, which I knew belonged to persons whom he had no inclination to disoblige; and was greatly surprised to hear that not one denier of it was due to the princes of the blood, nor to any of the pensionaries of the state, who were all paid the April quarter, and would be likewise as exactly those of July and October, since I had not taken up any of the payments before hand. The king, after obliging me to repeat these words several times, and even to swear to the truth of them, broke into an exclamation against those wicked detractors, and impudent impostures, as he called them; "but," added he, "what do you intend to do with the receivers and officers, whom you keep prisoners in your train?" The astonishment into which this question threw me, was alone sufficient to convince the king of the falshood of this accusation; nor was it difficult for me to perceive that moment, that the malice of
messieurs

messieurs of the council would recoil on themselves; and that it would disclose more effectually the secret motives of their conduct than any thing I could say to him. His majesty required no other explanation from me; on the contrary, he loaded me with praises, and gave me a thousand proofs of his friendship and esteem. 1596.

Having been told that the sum I had raised must be very considerable, upon his asking me what it was, I replied, that being unwilling to keep any part of it in my hands, either for my charges, expences, or pension, that the receivers-general might find the full sum specified in the accounts, and learn from thence never to keep back any part of his revenues, his majesty might himself deduct my expences from the fifteen hundred thousand crowns which I had brought him. A sum so considerable gave great pleasure to the king, who was in extreme necessity for money: he told me, that he would take care my expences should be all paid; and that besides my pension of ten thousand livres a month, which he raised to eighteen, he would present me with the sum of six thousand crowns, as a reward for the service I had just done him. He commanded me to say nothing of what had passed between him and me, and sent me to lay apart from the money I had brought him what was necessary for the payment of the six companies of Swiss, at the rate of eighteen hundred crowns a company, and to give it them the next day.

I returned to my carriages, which stood in two courts belonging to the sieur de Martinbault, under the same guard that had conducted them to Rouen. I ordered them to be unloaded, and the barrels that contained the money to be placed in apartments, the locks of which were changed, and secured by large padlocks, with three keys to each; the two receivers had one a-piece and myself the third. The next morning I sent the Swiss officers the ten thou-

1596. sand crowns that were due to them by three clerks, escorted by ten of the guard.

A short time after I had sent away this escort, Sancy, to whom the king had said, that he must pay the Swifs, and who was generally charged with this employment, sent me a billet, in which he desired me to deliver to the sieur Le-Charron, the bearer, ninety thousand crowns for the payment of the Swifs. These were the terms in which the billet was conceived; for this counsellor would have thought it a degradation of his high rank to have condescended to any politeness or explanation with his colleagues. I was equally offended at the stiff air of this letter, and the impudent demand of a sum that I knew to be three times more than was due; therefore answered the bearer haughtily, that I neither knew Sancy, his writing, nor his orders. "How! do you not know Sancy!" said Charron, surprized, no doubt, at my presumption, for at this name the whole council trembled, the rank Sancy held in it approaching very near to that of superintendant. Perceiving that I had no intention to send any other answer, he went back to report it with all the timidity of a servant who is apprehensive of awakening the bad humours of his master. Unfortunately, for Sancy, he repeated my message before several persons who were witnesses likewise of his transports. "We shall soon see," said he, swearing, "whether he knows me or not." Then, after loading me with what invectives he thought fit, he went directly to Saint-Ouen to the king. "Well, Sancy," said his majesty to him, "have you been to pay our Swifs?" "No, sire," replied Sancy, with a sullen air, "I cannot go, for it does not please your monsieur de Rosny that I should, who plays the emperor in his apartment, sits upon his barrels of money like an ape upon a block, and says he knows no one; and I am not sure whether you will have more credit with him than any one else." "How is this!" replied the
the

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the king, "I see you will never be weary of doing this man bad offices, because I confide in him, and he serves me diligently." His majesty added, that my refusal was so much the less probable, as I had, by his order, agreed to give this money to the Swiss. Sancy supported his assertion by the testimony of Le-Charron, whom he had brought along with him. The king, suspecting some new instance of malignity, ordered Biart, one of his grooms of the bedchamber, to go and fetch me.

As soon as he saw me, he asked me what had happened between Sancy and me. "I am going to tell you, sire," replied I boldly: and accordingly, without fearing the resentment of the terrible Sancy, I related all that had passed, in terms that sufficiently mortified his vanity. Sancy, who was not of a temper to yield, became more insolent than before, and assuming an imperious tone, an altercation so spirited ensued between us, although in the king's presence, that his majesty was obliged to command us to be silent. That instant, ceasing to speak to my adversary, I turned towards the king, and intreated him to give me no superior in affairs wherein I acted solely by his order. The gallery at Saint-Ouen, where this scene passed, was crowded with a great number of persons, who, being weary of Sancy's insolence, rejoiced to see him suffer this little disgrace. "It would have been very difficult," said some, as I was afterwards informed, "for two such geniusses to have exercised the same employments, without one of them being superfluous; but in the humour the king is in at present, the best œconomist will be his choice." Others beheld my increase of favour with envy; and others, who probably had very little regard for either of us, laughed at the novelty of the sight, and cried, "There is one hot-headed man, who has met with another that will stick by him."

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The report of those great sums with which I had filled the king's coffers was no sooner spread, than I was overwhelmed with the demands of an infinite number of his creditors, most of whom were sent by messieurs of the council; who through impatience to see it dissipated soon, agreed with the creditors to have the usual drawbacks upon their debts. My principal view in raising this money being to make a fund for those military expeditions which the king was shortly to begin, without his being obliged to load the people with new imposts, I was resolved not to suffer it to be squandered away; and therefore resisted all their importunities, and continued unmoved by their insolence and threats. But reflecting afterwards, that there was an absolute necessity for sending home the eight receivers-general, who alone were acquainted with the uses to which I put this money, I was afraid of giving too much occasion for slander, by keeping so large a sum in my possession after their departure; and I resolved to send it to the royal treasury. The king, who thought his money was no where secure but in my hands, endeavoured several times to vanquish my scruples; but in vain: I was determined to prevent the least suspicion upon this occasion, and therefore confided it to the care of the two treasurers, Morfontaine and Gobelin. I removed his majesty's fears by promising him that I would observe so carefully how this money was laid out, that he should not suffer the least loss. I separated, in the presence of the receivers, those sums that were necessary for the payment of the army, the expence of an artillery of twenty pieces of cannon, with double equipages, a sufficient quantity of powder, besides a convoy of other implements necessary for a siege, such as pick-axes, &c. which I caused to be carried to Amiens. I likewise laid aside fifty thousand crowns more for the king's privy purse, out of which he generally bestowed presents, unknown to the catholics, on many old officers and protestant

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protestant soldiers who had served him faithfully in his wars. The remainder, which I calculated with the greatest exactness, amounted still to four hundred and fifty thousand crowns, and I carefully preserved both my former accounts, and those relating to the sums that were taken from the total. But being desirous of having a second proof of what the gentlemen of the council and their receivers-general were capable of, I affected great negligence concerning the disposal of the money; and when the receivers came to me, before they set out for their offices, to demand a copy of my accounts, I replied, that having no longer any concern about a sum that was now under the care of other persons, and they having been witnesses themselves of the uses to which the money had been applied, I had destroyed those papers, as having now no further occasion for them. This the receivers did not fail to inform their masters of.

A month was passed since the money was carried to the treasury, during which they made some payments out of it that I likewise pretended to keep no account of: but here it was not possible to commit a mistake; for no sums being paid without a warrant from the council, all that was necessary was, to keep an exact memorandum of it, which I did. These warrants in a short time amounted to fifty thousand crowns, and consequently there was still four hundred thousand in the treasury. The king, however, some days after, demanding two hundred thousand crowns to be sent to Amiens, where the designed preparations were already made, particularly for the taking of Hedin, Sancy and the rest replied, that they believed this sum was still in the treasury, and that was all; and sending for D'Incarville, who was likely to know best, having the care of the registers, he assured the king that there was hardly two hundred thousand crowns in his coffers. His majesty, to whom I had said three days before that there was still four hundred thou-

1596. land crowns remaining, was extremely surprized; but their assertions were so positive that they forced his belief; and he told me that I must certainly be mistaken. I was so sure of the contrary, that I mentioned before D'Incarville himself, and all my colleagues, whom his majesty had sent for, that there was a mistake of one half of the money. D'Incarville replied, that his registers were more certain than my memory; and offered to bring, the next day, an extract of all the sums that had been paid out of the treasury. I perceived from whence so great a security proceeded, and I was resolved to suffer them, till the last moment, to flatter themselves that they were going to gain a complete victory over me. I had courage enough to conceal, even from the king, the stratagem I had made use of, and to endure, without reply, the reproaches he made me, for letting this sum go out of my hands, contrary to his desire.

The accounts were brought the next day, well attested, and no mistake was found in the sums which had been laid out; that would have been too palpable: the whole mistake lay in the receipt, which was founded upon their full persuasion that I had really destroyed the papers which proved the quantity and quality of the coin carried at different times to the royal treasury. I secretly reflected with astonishment on the subtilty with which they had acted with regard to this receipt, so as to spread over it an obscurity impenetrable to any one who was not possessed of a full proof of its falshood, and with what art they had given to this obscurity an air of truth, and even of conviction. I asked to see the receipts, with a feigned ill-humour, which seemed to these gentlemen a confession of my defeat. The council offered to make the receivers-general depose upon oath the numbers and contents of those carriages which had been sent to the royal treasury. I replied, that the discussion would be too tedious. D'Incarville, who took great advan-

tages of my dissembled perplexity, told me, that I might go and examine the register of the finances upon the spot, since they could not be moved out of the offices. Although I easily comprehended that these registers, public and authorised as they were, might still be counterfeited like the rest, yet I could not imagine the manner in which it was done, the receipt for each of the carriages being signed by D'Arnaud and De L'Hôte, whose handwriting I knew: I had therefore a curiosity to see these registers: all appeared very exact, and in the usual forms. Messieurs of the council began then to insult over me, and used their supposed advantages very ill.

I now thought it time to silence them, and to cover them in their turn with a real confusion. Accordingly, I produced the accounts, signed by the eight receivers-general; and likewise an exact memorandum of all the warrants. That instant all their arrogance vanished, and they would have been reduced to the necessity of confessing their roguery, had they not bethought themselves of a contrivance to avoid it; but so poor a one, as still left them all the disgrace. A clerk, instructed by D'Incarville, came to the king. and told him, that L'Hôte, who kept the key of the hall where the register lay, being absent one day when one of the most considerable of the carriages was brought to the treasury, and the receivers who conducted it being in haste to return, he thought it would be sufficient to mark the sum contained in the carriage upon a loose sheet of paper, intending to make it be afterwards revised, and signed by D'Incarville, and inserted in the registers; but that he himself afterwards going to Heudicourt, it had slipped out of his memory; for which he intreated his majesty's pardon. The king contented himself with slightly reprimanding him for his neglect, ordering more care to be taken of the registers for the future. Then going towards the constable (who was at the end of the gallery

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where all this had passed, and who in the whole affair had appeared more favourable to the gentlemen of the council than to me) he cried out to him at a distance, in the presence of several persons, that his money was found, and that he knew in good time those in whom he ought to confide.

Amidst these contentions came the day appointed for the meeting of the states of the kingdom, or rather of the assembly of notables; that is, of persons of consideration; for so it is that they were called. The reason of adopting this name*, instead of that of the states of the kingdom, which should naturally have been used, arose wholly from the lawyers and financiers, who perceiving that at this time they had riches and influence to give them such a superiority to the other classes, as they were unwilling any but the clergy should share with them, disdained to see themselves levelled with the people by one common denomination; which yet must have been the case, if the forms used in these assemblies, and particularly the distinction of the three orders, had been preserved. They, indeed, made their appearance with magnificence and splendor, which sunk the nobility, the soldiers, and

* Perefice says, that it is because the king had not time to assemble the states together: "The kings (says D'Aubigné, with his usual malevolence) have recourse to such sorts of assemblies, when those of the states general are tedious, difficult, or suspected by them. The design of assembling these little states being to find money to carry on the war against Spain, there were several schemes proposed and agreed to; the pancarte, or old rate, was the chief, which was but very ill received in many places of the kingdom," &c. Tom. III. liv. iv. ch. 14. De Thou says very little of it, liv. cxviii. and Davilano more. All that is said in these Memoirs about this assembly is

found, so far as I know, no where else: and in order to render it the more intelligible, I have taken the liberty which I have desired in the preface to this work, and that was, to compare with each other all the thoughts that the compilers of M. de Sully's manuscripts have made use of in their Memoirs, without any order of connection. As we may well suppose that they were all mutually connected, and had each their proper object in the mind of this great statesman, it entirely coincides with his views, to apply them to the subjects to which they naturally belong. And all that can be desired is, I think, never to alter the substance of the thoughts in my original; to which I have principally applied myself.

other

other members of the state, below consideration, since they were not able to dazzle the eyes with splendid equipages, the glitter of gold, nor a long train of attendants; things which will always draw the envy, the reverence, and the worship, of the people; or, more, truly, will always shew our depravity and folly.

Such, in general, is the notion that ought to be formed of these great, these august assemblies; those men of whom one imagines, that they must come thither with minds full of wisdom and public spirit, warm with all the zeal that animated the ancient legislators, commonly think on no other business than how to make a ridiculous display of their pomp, and shew their effeminacy to most advantage; and whose appearance would sink them into infamy, if they were beheld without prejudice. To complete the notion, we must take in the discord of the several bodies which compose these assemblies, their contrarieties of interest, their opposition of opinion, the desire of each to over-reach another, their intrigues, and their confusion; all which, together with that meanness discovered in the prostitution of eloquence, have their original from the same hateful cause: for by some fatality it comes to pass, that those improvements which an age makes in knowledge above preceding times, are not applied to the advancement of virtue, nor serve any other purpose than to refine wickedness. It is true, that in these assemblies there may be found a small number of men of great abilities and great virtues, men whose qualities no-body disputes; but, instead of being forced into public notice, they are treated with an affectation of negligence and contempt, which sink them into silence, and with them suppress the voice of the public good. Thus long experience has shewn, that an assembly of these states rarely produces the good expected from it: for that such might be its effect, the members ought to be equally instructed in true and honest policy; at least,

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least, ignorance and knavery should sit dumb in the presence of men of knowledge and integrity: but such is always the character of multitudes, that for one wise man, there are many fools, and presumption is the constant attendant of folly; and it is here more than in any place, that great virtues, instead of exciting respect and emulation, provoke hatred and envy.

Besides, if the prince that holds these assemblies is powerful and fond of power, he will easily defeat their schemes, or crush them into silence; but, if he is weak, and unacquainted with his own rights, an unbounded licentiousness of debate will soon sink the kingdom into all the miseries that naturally follow the depression of the royal authority. Necessity therefore requires, that there should be, both in the sovereign and the subjects, a complete knowledge of their several rights, and mutual obligations. The first law of a sovereign is, that he should keep the law, for he has himself two sovereigns, God and the law: justice ought to preside on his throne, and gentleness to support it. God is the true owner of kingdoms, and monarchs are but the ministers, who ought to exhibit to the people a true copy of the perfections of him in whose place they stand; and remember, that they do not govern like him but when they govern as fathers. In hereditary monarchies, there is an hereditary mistake: the sovereign is master of the life and property of his subjects, and by means of these few words, *Such is our pleasure*, is dispensed from giving the reasons of his conduct, and from having any reasons to give. Supposing this were really the right of a king, is it not the utmost degree of imprudence, to incur voluntarily the hatred of those who must every moment have his life in their hands? And hated he must certainly be, who forces a concession of power, which he declares beforehand his intention to abuse.

With regard to subjects, the first law which religion, reason, and nature prescribe them, is to obey;

obey; their duty is to reverence, honour, and fear their princes, as representatives of the supreme governor, who may be said to appear visibly on earth by these his ministers, as he appears in heaven by the orbs of light. These duties they are to pay from a principle of gratitude, for the security and advantages they enjoy under the shelter of the royal authority: for the calamity of having an unjust, ambitious, and arbitrary king, they have no other remedy but that of softening him by submission, and propitiating God by prayer. All grounds of resistance, however solid they may be thought, will appear, upon a careful examination, to be nothing more, than artful and subtle pleas for disloyalty; nor has it been found that, by this practice, princes have been reformed, or taxes abolished; but to the calamities, which gave room for complaints, has been added a new degree of misery, as may be found by enquiring into the sentiments of the lower people, and particularly those of the country.

Such are the principles upon which the mutual happiness of governors and subjects might easily be fixed, if in general assemblies of the nation, each party appeared fully convinced of the truth of these maxims: but, supposing this the case, there would still be less need of general assemblies, to which recourse is never had but when there is some disagreement between the members and the head. It may, however, be concluded, that, as these assemblies are at present useless, both on account of the occasions on which they are called, and of the methods in which they proceed, so they might be of great efficacy for the support of regularity and general virtue, if the prince, acting as the real head of united members, would call them with no other purpose, than to oblige those who lay down their employments, to give an account of their administration, in the face of the kingdom, and to chuse with wisdom and discernment, those by whom their
places

1596. places should be supplied; animating them to a due discharge of their offices by his exhortations, and by a public distribution of praise and blame, punishments and rewards*.

Henry, while he waited for the meeting of the assembly, took a journey to Arques, Dieppe, and Caudebec, &c. that he might have a sight of the places where so many memorable actions had been performed, and I accompanied him throughout his journey.

When he returned to Rouen, he opened the assembly, by a speech, uttered with a dignity becoming a great prince, and a sincerity with which princes are unacquainted: he declared that, to avoid all appearance of violence or compulsion, he had determined not to call an assembly of deputies, named by the king and blindly obsequious to all his inclinations, but that he gave an admission at large to persons of all ranks and conditions, that men of knowledge and merit might have an opportunity to propose, without fear, whatever they thought necessary for the public good; that at that time he would not attempt to confine them by any limitations, but enjoined them not to make an ill use of this freedom from restriction, by any attempt to lessen the sovereign authority, which is the chief strength of the kingdom; and exhorted them to establish union amongst their members, to give ease to the people, to clear the royal treasury from debts, which, though it was subject to them, it never had contracted; to shew their justice in reducing exorbitant salaries, without lessening those that were necessary; and to settle, for times to come, a fund clear of incumbrances, and sufficient to maintain the army.

He added, that it should be no objection to him, that the measures proposed were not of his own

* There cannot, I think, any thing be added to the justness of these sentiments. And we need only repeat hither those who, as

Comines, Boulainvilliers, &c. have taken the side of the states, and the aristocratical party.

contrivance, provided he found them dictated by justice, and public spirit: that they should not find him pleading his age, his experience, or personal qualities, as an exemption from any just regulations, though princes often made excuses far less defensible; but that he would shew, by his example, that it was no less the business of kings to enforce edicts, than of subjects to obey them*.

Henry rose after this speech, declaring that neither he nor his council would be present at their consultations, that they might be wholly freed from constraint; and accordingly went out with all his counsellors, leaving only me, to lay before the assembly such accounts, memoirs, and public papers, as were necessary for their information.

When I gave an account of the last assembly of these states at Paris, I spoke at large of their methods of proceeding, and the forms used in those great and numerous assemblies; and shall therefore only observe, at present, that, excepting the subject of their deliberations, this assembly resembled the former. As they were now necessarily to come to some conclusion, particularly with relation to the subsidies, and to settle the method of raising them, they could think of nothing better to be done, than to make a collection of old useless regulations of a nature contrary to the present state of affairs; instead of considering that the nation ought to be treated as a body afflicted with some

* "If I were desirous, says he, to pass for an elaborate orator, I would have introduced here more fine words than good will; but my ambition aims at something higher than to speak well: I aspire to the glorious titles of the deliverer and restorer of France. I have not called you together, as my predecessors have done, to oblige you blindly to approve of my will and pleasure; I have caused you to be assembled, in order to receive your

counsels, to depend upon them, and to follow them; in short, to put myself into your hands as my guardians: this is a declaration which is not very common for kings, for grey hairs, and conquerors like me to make; but the love which I bear my subjects, and the extreme fondness which I have to preserve my state, have made me find every thing easy and every thing honourable." *Peref. part 2.*

1596. new and extraordinary distemper, and therefore requiring an uncommon remedy, and that in proportion as its mechanism is better known, the operations performed upon it ought to be altered; such is the force of prejudice, that men continue obstinately to endeavour the cure of their present disorders, by means of which the inefficacy is demonstrated by their inability to prevent the evils or to stop their progress. An injudicious reverence for antiquity; a false notion of causes, occasioned by the distance of time; a want of diligent reflection on the past, and of clear views of the future, about which our self-love hinders us from coming to any agreement, all contribute to perpetuate the wrong measures of ancient times. It is a maxim, with some, that laws and customs are not to be changed; a maxim to which I zealously adhere, except when the advantage, and what is much stronger, the necessity of the public * requires their alteration.

Accordingly they amused themselves with raking old schemes out of the dust, and went on still en-

* The genius of the French nation, they say, is such, that this alone renders all change, even the most useful and necessary, extremely dangerous for us: a system, whose foundation it seems all the world, at this day, agrees was excellent, and which, notwithstanding this, has had very troublesome consequences, makes us insist more than ever upon this consideration. The duke de Sully, who lived at a time in which he did not want for proofs of the defects objected to the nation, would have answered to this, that two things are absolutely necessary in any nation whatever, in order to secure the success of such sort of enterprises: the first is an authority in the legislator, sufficiently great not to be obliged to change, or abate the least tittle of his plan through fear, policy, or compliance: the second, is a wisdom equally great, to prepare all the means for putting it in execution. Amidst a great number of real changes that have been made in the different parts of the government, which will be seen in the sequel of these Memoirs, we may observe a still greater number of projects which have not been executed, though formed a great while ago: and what is the reason? why, because Henry the great and his minister watched and waited for the proper conjunctures and circumstances, &c. which should render them certain and infallible. I will not scruple to say, that perfect skill consists not in imagining, but in knowing, the hazards that proceed from too great precipitation, and too great slowness, to be aware of the proper opportunity; and in short, to know how to conduct and how to prepare for it.

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larging the collection, which they found already to be of no value, till an impossibility came full in their view, and destroyed their project; for it appeared that these old constitutions were adapted to a form of government in which royalty, though decorated with a specious title, was a state of servitude; and could therefore not be applied to a time when the public interest had concentrated, in a single person, the authority which was formerly distributed amongst great numbers, and established monarchy as the surest foundation of general security.

This fancy was followed by another, which held them for a time by some specious appearances, though, in effect, it was no less inconvenient than the former. This was the establishment of a new council, which they thought it proper to denominate the council of reason, whose members should be first named by the assembly, and afterwards by the sovereign courts. But there was already a council of this kind, and that very council had been apparently the cause of the disorders of the finances, and the misery of the nation. This signified nothing; the whole multitude suffered themselves to be so dazzled by a fine name, and a new election, that it was proposed, and determined, to make the same evil its own remedy. It was settled, that the new council should divide into two portions the revenues of the king, which they estimated, without much examination, at thirty millions*; that they should keep one half in their own hands, for the discharge of arrears, pensions, wages of offices, and other public debts and engagements; and that out of the same sum they should repair or make

* The author has reason to say that this computation is not exact, since, notwithstanding the augmentation of the king's revenues, and the clearing of his debts that happened under his ministry, and which may be seen in the sequel of

these Memoirs to amount to a very considerable sum, cardinal Richelieu did not value the whole revenues of the state, after all the alterations which he himself had made, at more than thirty-five millions. Test. Pol. part 2. page 152.

cities,

1596. cities, buildings, roads, or other public works; and that of this sum neither the king nor the sovereign court should have power to take cognizance, or examine the application. It may easily be imagined, how the members of the council flattered their rapacity by a disposal absolute and unaccountable of half the revenues of the state: let us for a moment suppose them dishonest in their management, what numbers must be distressed, what confusion and ruin must ensue?

The other part was left to the king, to be managed by him, or his ministers, with equal exemption from account: this was burthened with all the expences of the artillery and fortifications, all foreign affairs, embassies, and negotiations, the support of his household, his buildings, and his equipage, the payment of his officers, and his privy purse. Neither party was confined by any prescriptions, as to the manner of raising or managing either share of the revenue; so they preserved that mutual independence on which the projectors valued themselves; as if the strength of the kingdom did not depend upon the power of assisting, according to their respective need, any part that should happen to be in distress, and supplying the sick, if I may use the expression, with the superfluous blood of those that are in health.

As the thirty millions at which the royal revenues have been rated, were suspected to be somewhat more than their real value, they resolved to create a new tax, by laying a penny in the shilling, upon all merchandises*, and provisions bought and sold in the kingdom, by wholesale or retail. When they computed the amount of the trade of particular persons, and the expences of necessity, convenience, and luxury, they concluded that this new tax might safely be rated at five millions; and the happy notion was blest a thousand times,

* Corn was the only thing that was exempted.

though in reality the scheme was no less chimerical than the new computation was defective*.

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When the assembly had thus brought their scheme in all its branches to perfection, they sent it by their deputies to the king, who received the proposal in his council: the indignation raised by this project instantly appeared by such a confusion of outcries and murmurs, that the king had great difficulty to make the council give their opinions one by one. The field of discussion was boundless; every man was made eloquent by vexation and resentment. When my turn came, I satisfied myself with saying coldly, that I had nothing to add to such fine harangues. The king, who observed me attentively, and wondered at my caution, resolved to have a private conversation with me before he gave the suffrage which was to determine for, or against the scheme of the assembly; he therefore adjourned the consideration of the affair till the morrow, in the presence of the same persons. When we were alone, he asked me with eagerness, the reason of my silence; and I made to him the following observations.

It is certain, that the assembly were so infatuated with their new scheme, that if the king should follow the opinion of his council, and reject it in high terms, he would expose himself to the danger of a general dissatisfaction; the more dangerous because the states assembled acknowledged no superior; nor allowed that even the king had power to alter their decisions. One of the most impor-

* M. de Sully thinks and speaks of the establishing a *sou* or penny in the shilling, as almost the whole world thought and spoke of it at that time. Le Grain nevertheless gives his suffrage to this tax, liv. vi. Matthieu does not condemn it; and what is of greater weight, Cardinal Richelieu finds it to be so much the more just as it is established, says

he, in divers other states, and had been already resolved on by a body of the state, under Francis I. However the difficulties and inconveniences which M. de Sully mentions in the sequel are real, and partly the same which made Richelieu be the first entirely to dissuade Lewis XIII. from establishing it. Test. Pol. part 2. ch. 9. sect. 7.

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tant maxims of monarchy is, that the king should take care not to reduce his subjects to actions of disobedience, or even to words of disrespect; besides, the king would directly break the word, by which he had promised the assembly to conform himself to their resolutions: and to conclude, all they who contrived, or had adopted the scheme, would make the rejection of it by the king, an argument by which they would convince themselves, that this was the true scheme of affairs, till by an attempt to put it in execution they were cured of their notion, and would insinuate, that only their prince had prevented them from seeing that practice established in France, which had been for so long a time desired. Every body knows, that it is the disposition of the people, especially of those that have spirit and resentment, to abuse the actions of their sovereign.

On the other side, it was equally certain that this project was at once destructive in its tendency, and impracticable in its execution; to give full conviction of this the least knowledge of the finances was sufficient: besides the obstructions which I have just been mentioning, how many more must arise from the competitions which would be produced by an election of the members of the council, who were to be taken equally from all the provinces of the kingdom. No sooner could this scheme, which was now only sketched out, be branched into particulars, than that appearance of impartiality and justice, by which the conduct of public affairs must be necessarily thrown into the hands of new and unexperienced men, would occasion innumerable miscalculations, and mistakes. It was apparent that the heads of the new council would immediately grow giddy, and that all the measures they would take would be only blunder accumulated on blunder.

From the impossibility that any advantage should arise from this scheme, I drew my arguments to persuade the king to consent to it; by which he would

would obtain, in the eyes of his people, the honour of falling readily into the measures which they themselves had marked out; and this condescension would be so far from lessening the royal authority, that when the new council had made the melancholy experiment of their strength, he would ultimately receive this advantage, that all the parts of the finances would fall back into his hands, with exemption from dependance. As the calculation of the royal revenues was made by the assembly, and the council selected from it, it would be supposed that they had taken in all necessary considerations relating to those payments, of which the collection was most difficult and expensive: they could not therefore take it amiss, that the king chose his fifteen million of that part which he liked best. Chusing for his part the revenue of the five great farms, *des parties casuelles, du domaine, et des aides*, he might expect, without presumption, to see them doubled, if not trebled, in a short time. This I spoke with full confidence, because I had already provided myself of responsible people, who had engaged to take these farms at a considerable advance. With respect to that which remained in the hands of the council of reason, the case was quite otherwise; and I would have been bound to the king, that the penny in the shilling, amongst others, would not, when all expences were defrayed, bring in above two hundred thousand crowns clear money.

The reason why I did not give this opinion openly in the council, was, because I thought it proper that it should seem to come from the king himself. The king, after having heard me with great attention, was afraid lest my advice should bring him into difficulties, and into a mistake in some sort irretrievable; but having considered my reasons very seriously, he resolved to follow my opinion.

When the council met next day, they determined as the day before, and I determined in the same manner. The king declaring that he could not fol-

1596. low their advice, left them in the utmost astonishment, and went in to the assembly, where he declared, in strong terms, that finding himself disposed to promote, with all his power, the inclinations of so wise a body, he received their scheme without any qualification or restriction, which he considered as consisting of three articles; the erection of an independent council, the division of the public revenues, and the levy of a penny in the shilling; that the assembly had nothing to do but in twenty-four hours to name the council; to give in a schedule of the thirty millions, that he might chuse his own share; and that they should see, by his conduct, whether he or the council were the better œconomists. The goodness and compliance of the king were loudly praised; and the council finding itself concluded by a determination so unanimous, which left no farther room for debate, at least between the king and his subjects, thought of nothing but returning to Paris, there to conclude this master-piece of policy.

The new council was not formed with so little disturbance as had been expected; that change of temper which retarded the election was so great, that penetrating persons saw from that moment how chimerical a scheme had been embraced by the multitude. The nomination was at last completed, in which the clergy were very busy from the first; and the cardinal de Gondy *, famous for his œconomical abilities, was put at its head, as if public affairs was to be administered by the same rules as those of a private house. The council of reason held their meetings regularly in the episcopal palace, where the cardinal had assigned them an apartment.

But no sooner had they begun to lay papers upon the table for the collection of the payments of the next year, but these new money-mongers were so

* Peter de Gondy, bishop of Paris, and brother to Albert de Gondy, duke of Retz, a peer and marechal of France, of whom we have spoken before.

much perplexed, that they knew not on which side to turn them. The farther they went the more the labyrinth was perplexed; they found no-body that would undertake for the penny in the shilling; the farmers asked for other funds, but at a discount which put them quite at a loss; and to add to their vexation, the business could not be put off: all the pensioners of the state came upon them, and talked of nothing but millions to people that had not yet got a single farthing. Chagrin and vexation soon broke the unanimity of the new council; they began immediately to quarrel, and reproach one another with ignorance and rashness. 1596.

The thing was come, in a few weeks, to this pass, that the council of reason could do nothing reasonably; and they were forced to apply to D'Incarville and me, and begged of us to come, at least once a week, and give them such counsel as we gave the king, whose part of the revenue they saw growing and flourishing day after day. I excused myself on account of my employ, which took me up altogether. They then addressed the king; who, with his ordinary goodness, commanded me to go: but I did not forget, on that occasion, what was necessary to his service. I lamented the state of the affairs of the council; I found no means of extrication, and I helped forward nothing but perplexity. In short, scarce three months had passed before these profound politicians, being at the end of all their art, and sinking under their burden, went to the king to beg to be discharged. The king, who I believe began to like this new regulation, that set him at ease, told them that every thing was difficult at first; advised them to take heart, and sent them away confuted by their own reasons. But they soon came back, and changed their intreaties to importunity; confessed that they had been in the wrong when they undertook to govern the kingdom, and shewed a thousand times more satisfaction

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on their dismissal from their employment, than at their advancement to it.

This burden fell upon me, as an addition to that with which I was already loaded, and my labour was so great, that it required both my days and nights. As I had a kind of passion for the re-establishment of the finances, I made prodigious advances in the ancient registers of the council of state, the parliaments, the chambers of accounts, and the court of aids, and even in the private accounts of the former secretaries of state, for the new ones would not communicate theirs. I did the same thing in the offices of the treasurers of France, in the treasury chamber, and in the papers of the treasurers of the exchequer*: I raked even into that vast collection where all the ordonnances are kept inscribed. Having a design to draw up a general state of the finances for the year 1595, which was the end of all my researches, I thought it fit to neglect nothing, that I might come as near as was possible, in the first year of my management, to the exactness to which I earnestly desired to carry it. Whatever fraud or mistake had crept into the finances, I imagined that it could be neither so great nor so general, but I should be able to prove and shew its original, by comparing these pieces which I have been mentioning, or by the inferences to be drawn from them, with a due observation of the different proportions of various times and alterations of affairs.

The people of the king's council were frightened at the sight of my project, and beginning to imagine that I should throw every thing open, blamed themselves now more than ever for not having with

* "Rosny, before he entered upon his office of superintendent, had furnished himself with all the necessary informations, the better to be enabled to acquit himself therein: he perfectly knew all the revenues of

"the kingdom, and all the expences necessary in raising them: he communicated all that he knew of this matter to the king, who had in like manner studied all these things thoroughly himself," &c. *Peres.* p. 225.

much

much vigour opposed my admission into the council. Maiffes, to whom I must do this justice, that as soon as he discovered my intentions he joined his endeavours with mine, gave me information of their terrors and regret. To confirm them in their suspicions, I declared in public, that I had obtained such intelligence about the finances, that they would be presently regulated upon another plan; and I desired that the comptroller-general, the intendant of the finances of France, the treasurer of the exchequer, and the receivers-general, should be joined with me, in order to draw up this general state of the finances, of which these very men were in such terror. I had the care, however, to keep the pen always between my own fingers. 1596.

However, I could not this time keep myself clear of several considerable errors, nor escape being tricked by these old practitioners. I think it is no shame to confess it; this very year they gained a profit of one fifth, which is exorbitant, though infinitely less than their ordinary gains. I proposed the next year to remedy both this and another mistake which I had committed: one of the chief tricks of the financiers was, to make the expence of the current year appear to be much more than the receipt, and to anticipate the revenues of the following year; by which means the expence of the next year, and of all the rest in succession, was thrown into a confusion, from which these men drew many advantages, particularly that of appearing never to have money which was not pre-engaged long before, and of being able to alledge this excuse to the king, and all those whom they were not inclined to pay. In the second place, they made use of that money: and, to conclude, they paid off the old debts at a very low price, and yet charged them entire in their accounts. This negligence of mine cost the kingdom this year two millions.

This fault I corrected the following year, during my residence in Brittany; so that from that time

1596. forward the receipts and expences exactly agreed. And in the mean time, to fill up the deficiency which my mistake had made, I took the *parties casuelles, les gabelles*, the five great farms, and the toll of the rivers, out of the hands of the duke of Florence, who held them under the names of Gondy, Senamy, Zamet, Le Grand, Parent, L'Argentier, and other old managers, who had no share in the new finances; and I increased these farms with two millions that had been lost by miscomputation. The contractors for the finances, and their associates of the council, were thunderstruck with this last blow; but for this time their spite vented itself in smoke, the king having supported me for some time in a manner so conspicuous, as sunk them all into inactive despondency. The consequence of his conduct to the assembly was, that he was made master, not only of the pretended council of reason, but likewise of his own, whose authority was now declining; and he had no longer reason to fear that his designs would miscarry, as formerly, by their obstruction.

The design in which he was then actually engaged, was the siege of Arras, which had been proposed in the council of war, which, excepting only the secretary, consisted merely of men of action: it had there passed without opposition; but the resolution was kept secret. because only by concealment could we be assured of success. That the merchants with whom I agreed for supplies of all necessary provisions might know nothing of the matter, I named to them a great number of cities along all the frontiers of Picardy, and Arras among the rest, at any of which they obliged themselves to deliver, during the whole campaign, fifty thousand loaves a day. Santeny, Robin de Tours, Mauleville, and Lambert chevalier de Guet d'Orleans, engaged likewise for the conveyance of every thing else, and particularly of twenty-five cannons.

The

The contract passed at so low a price, that if the misfortune that happened at Amiens a little after, 1596. had not obliged us to draw thither the forces designed against Arras, they would have been considerable losers: but as it happened, they made a reasonable gain.

MEMOIRS

O F

SULLY.

BOOK IX.

1597. **T**HE preparations that were making for war, did not prevent their enjoying at Paris all the amusements that winter commonly brings along with it. The gentleness of the government secured the tranquility of the public, who tasted all the sweets of it, without any of that alloy which for so long a time had imbittered all their pleasures. Gallantry, shews, play, took up the time of the courtiers; and the king, who liked these diversions through taste, permitted them through policy. Monsieur and madam De Fervaques intreated me to allow of the addresses of monsieur De Laval*, the son of this lady, to my eldest daughter. I referred them to the king, without whose consent I could not now dispose of my daughter, since it had been proposed by the princess, to marry her to monsieur De Rohan; with

* William De Hauteemer, count deGrancey, seigneur de Fervaques, who afterwards became a marechal of France. His wife was Andrée d'Allegre, widow to Guy count de Laval, whose son was likewise called Guy, the twentieth of that name, count de Laval, de Montfort, &c. who was some time after killed in Hungary: in him ended that branch of Laval, or rather of Rieux, which continued only in the female line; for this Guy count de Laval was of the house of Coligny,

whom the king being at that time offended, approved of monsieur De Laval. 1597-

The court every day had the pleasure of a new entertainment, from engagements of this nature, the most splendid of which was given by the constable, at the solemnity of baptizing his son. This was the pretence; but it was well known, that one of the most beautiful young ladies of the court, and who was afterwards married to an old man, was the real object of these gallantries. Montmorency, amongst all the courtiers, chose out twelve noblemen for his ballet, who he thought would appear there with the greatest magnificence; and prevailed upon the king to lay his commands upon me to be of this number. The elegance and propriety with which it was conducted, and which is the very essence of these sort of diversions, was superior to any thing I had ever seen of the kind. This entertainment was universally allowed to have greatly excelled all that went before it: it was likewise the last, and a strange disturbance happened at the end. I retired about two in the morning, and had been an hour and a half in bed, when I saw Beringhen enter my chamber, with the utmost consternation painted in his countenance: he could but just tell me that the king wanted me; and assure me, in answer to my enquiries, that no accident had happened to his person; for this was the first question I asked, and his reply comforted me beforehand for the misfortune, whatever it was, since I saw none which were absolutely irremediable, but those that threatened his life. I put on my cloaths hastily, and ran to the Louvre, in great anxiety of mind: upon my entering the king's chamber, I saw him walking about very fast, his arms folded, his head reclined, and all the marks of a deep uneasiness * impressed on his

* " Being as it were thunder-
 " struck at this, and yet looking
 " up to heaven as he commonly
 " does more in adversity than pro-

" sperity, he spoke aloud, This
 " blow is from heaven! Then
 " pausing a little said, I have suf-
 " ficiently acted the part of king

coun-

1597. countenance. The courtiers stood in different corners of the room, leaning against the hangings, without uttering a single word.

The king coming to meet me, pressed my hand with great emotion, crying, "Ah, my friend, what a misfortune! Amiens is taken." I confess, I continued immovable, like all the rest, at this unforeseen blow: a place so strong, so well provided with every thing that was necessary, so near to Paris, and on the side of Picardy the only key to the kingdom, to be taken so suddenly ere we could be informed that it was threatened with an attack: the thing was almost incredible, and the general consternation appeared to be too well grounded. However, I took my resolution immediately, and while the king, who had received this news as he was preparing to go to bed, related to me the manner in which the Spaniards, with some sacks of walnuts, had surprised this important place*, I reflected that, instead of increasing, to no purpose, the general dismay, prudence suggested that, in the present circumstance, it was necessary to keep up every one's spirits, and to comfort the king. I therefore told him that I had in good time just put the finishing hand to a scheme, by which not only Amiens, but several other places, would be restored to him, without much difficulty.

"of France, it is time now that I assume the character of king of Navarre: and turning to the marchioness, who wept, we must quit our present warfare, and take horse to engage in another."

* It was on the eleventh of March. Hernand Teillo de Portocarrero, a Spaniard, the author of this scheme, had disguised like country men and country women, carrying goods to market, about thirty Spaniards, who stopped up one of the gates of the town, and amused the guard, by pouring out at the entrance thereof a cart loaded with sacks full of filberts which

one of them untied; and during this time some Spanish troops, who lay concealed behind the hedges, marched up, and putting the guard to the sword, made themselves masters of the town. See an account of this in all the historians, under the year 1597. Hernand Teillo was killed in bravely defending this town against Henry IV. He used to say, that the three greatest commanders he knew, were Henry for the conduct of a large army, the duke of Maienne for the siege of a town, and marechal Biron for a battle. Matthieu, tom. II. liv. ii. p. 232.

This hint alone seemed, on a sudden, to have robbed the late misfortune of half its force; and although it did not hinder the king from reflecting on all the difficulties of an enterprise which might have very fatal consequences, yet, as the astonishment the courtiers were in left them nothing to say in answer to the king's interrogatories but what tended to increase his disquiet, his hopes were greatly raised by what I had said, and he desired to know what methods they were by which I proposed to serve him. I replied, that he should be informed by the papers I had drawn up for that purpose; and I went out as if to fetch them, leaving the king at least in a more composed state of mind than I had found him. Had he been a witness of my perplexity and uneasiness, when I was alone in my closet, he would have suppressed part of those praises which he bestowed on me when I had quitted his chamber; for then it was, that, resigning myself up to reflection, I comprehended the whole extent of those misfortunes, which might be expected from the present posture of affairs. The king's treasure exhausted, not a single regiment fit for service, at the same time that there was an absolute necessity both for money and troops in great abundance, and that without any delay.

I read over my private memoirs: I revolved in my mind all those schemes for levying money, which I had employed my leisure hours in concerting, foreseeing that the king would have soon an occasion for them. Most of these schemes might be reduced to two different kinds; one very easy and plain, wherein all that was necessary to be done was to augment the land-tax, and other imposts already established; the other more difficult, which consisted in contriving new sources from whence money might be drawn. The first I did not think it prudent to have recourse to, since, after all the hardships which the country people had endured, to oppress them still more by an augmentation of taxes,

1597. taxes, the sole weight of which falls upon them, and at a time when they but just began to breathe again, was to complete the ruin of the state, and to deprive the king himself, for the future, of his most fruitful, and in one sense his most certain resources.

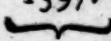
I then turned my thoughts another way, and fixed upon the following project, which was to demand of the clergy a free gift for a year, if not for two years, and oblige them to make immediate payment; to augment the old offices with new members, four in each sovereign court, besides four masters of accounts in every chamber, two in every office in the finances, two offices of counsellor in every presidial court, an assessor in every royal tribunal, and an elect in every election; to add a third to all the officers of the finances*; to keep back half a year's payment of the arrears of sums borrowed from the contractors in the last reign; to increase the tax on salt fifteen *sous* a pottle, and to leave it always in that state, because such an increase would give room for the suppression of certain offices too chargeable to the public; to raise the entry of goods, and the tolls of rivers a third part, by a new estimate; and, as all these measures gave us, for the most part, only the hope of money, to begin by borrowing twelve hundred thousand livres from the richest people of the court and principal cities, and to assign them payments out of an augmentation of the gabels and five great farms; and, to supply the ready money which we should have occasion for besides, to raise a prosecution in the chamber of justice against the old contractors, who had made considerable fortunes, and oblige them to suffer a new tax, in form of a loan.

* The offices of the finances were possessed by two persons: the first was called L'Ancien; the second, who had been appointed after, was called L'Alternatif; and this third was called Triennial, because he had every third year his rotation with the other two, who alone had the privilege of reimbursing the Triennial.

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This plan was indeed of sufficient extent. However, it was not my intention, that these methods should be all made use of at once; but, being uncertain how long the war would continue, they might employ them successively, beginning with those which were the least burthenfome. With regard to the troops that were necessary, I thought they could not do better than to raise them in those provinces of the kingdom which had no longer any occasion for defence. Thus I taxed the isle of France, by joining Barry to it, with a complete regiment; the Orleanois with Touraine was to furnish a second: and Normandy itself a third: these regiments were to consist of fifteen hundred and fifty men, furnished and maintained by the provinces, from the day of their arrival before Amiens; because these provinces enjoyed the right of calling the regiments by their own name, and of appointing the officers.

Five days after I carried my project to the king, with the proper evidences formally drawn up in thirteen papers. His majesty retired to examine them with me, in the presence of D'Arambure, Lomenie, Beringhen, and L'Oserai. When I had finished reading them, I told the king that, with these supplies, there was nothing to retard his departure for the expedition of Amiens; since all the necessary preparations for a camp in Picardy were already made in such a manner, that, I durst assure his majesty, his army would not only find their provision in great plenty, but likewise every thing requisite for mere convenience, with the same ease, and at the same price as in a city. I added, that whatever resource this scheme might afford the king in his present necessities, his majesty must not imagine it could be carried into execution, without increasing the number of those wounds of which France was far from being wholly cured: that he need only take a slight view of the immense debts and engagements with which the state was overburdened;

1597.  burdened; that, to an exhausted state, a new tax, in whatever manner disguised, is always the same; therefore the war should not be renewed, but with a view of procuring an advantageous peace, which was now become absolutely necessary: and however great the public misery was at present, I was fully convinced that twelve years of continued peace would be sufficient to restore the kingdom to a flourishing condition.

I did not doubt but that, by the conduct which the king appeared disposed to observe, the enemies, notwithstanding the advantages they had gained, would be the first to wish for the end of the war; and at that time I freely disclosed a thought to the king, the justness of which was verified by the event; and this was, that the first overtures for a peace would be made by the king of Spain, whom policy, in that state of weakness and incapacity to which the common course of nature had reduced him, would not permit to expose his crown to the uncertain chances of war, always to be feared, but chiefly in the beginning of a prince's reign who was still a child. I even went so far as to foretel, that Spain would purchase peace by the restoration of all the towns she had taken from France.

My scheme for raising money was so much approved by the king, that he resolved to propose it himself in full council; but he communicated it beforehand to a kind of little council of war, composed of the duke of Montpensier, messieurs De Montmorency, De Maienne, D'Auvergne, De Biron, D'Ornano, De Bellegarde, De Saint-Luc, De Fervaques, De Roquelaure, and De Frontenac: he afterwards summoned an extraordinary council, to which he admitted all in Paris who had a right to a place there, particularly the chief persons of the assembly of Rouen, who still resided there. The king could take no happier measures to establish his authority upon the weakness of this great assembly, which was now acknowledged by themselves. He began

began with lamenting the loss of Amiens, declaring the necessity there was to recover this city as soon as possible, giving in a full plan of all that was necessary for that purpose: he concluded with asking the advice of all that were present, concerning the means of carrying it into execution, complaining, in order to conceal from them what he himself had to propose, that his most useful and necessary enterprises were always opposed by difficulties, and retarded by delays.

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Here the king stopped, as if to wait for the deliberations of the assembly. Each looked upon the other without uttering a single word; at length the nobles broke silence, but it was only to refer the affair to the financiers, who in their turn replied, that it belonged wholly to the nobles. Henry urging them to deliver their opinions, some general proposals for new levies were made, which were immediately opposed by one half of the assembly; and the counsellors finding their speech all at one time, to ridicule, in a confused and disorderly manner, whatever might be offered by either party, the king, seizing that moment when their animosity was carried to such a height, that there was not the least probability of their coming to any agreement, drew the memorial out of his pocket, telling them, that, although he had but little experience in the affairs of the finances, yet, upon the present occasion, he would offer his opinion, which he was always ready to give up for a better: he then prepared to read the paper, which threw all that were present into a fixed attention, and afterwards into an astonishment, that rendered them speechless and immovable. Henry suffered them to remain in this silence for two moments, then declaring that he understood it as an unanimous consent, added, that as he had no intention to make use of all those measures at one time, he would begin by borrowing the sum of twelve hundred thousand livres; and exhorted the nobles and the wealthiest persons in

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the kingdom, to comply voluntarily with the present necessity of the times, and depend upon his royal word, that the lenders should have their principal reimbursed in the space of two years, together with the interest. His majesty then brought forward the fifteen *sous* upon salt, the establishment of the third man in the finances, and an enquiry into the conduct of fraudulent contractors. The affair was decreed, and a decree drawn up upon that plan. We had, in a very little time, three hundred thousand crowns voluntarily lent: the creation of the third man brought in twelve hundred thousand, and the same sum was drawn from the collectors of taxes, to whom the treasurers of France were joined, but were suffered however to tax themselves.

The council of the finances, accustomed to rejoice in the calamity of the people, were soon comforted under these new subsidies, provided they might pass through their hands. They represented to the king, after having greatly commended his memorial, that the success of it depended upon his employing persons of great experience, ready dispatch, and possessed of a full power to execute it. The king replied, that the person he was resolved to employ should be invested with his authority; and that, with regard to the other qualities, he pitched upon me (I was present at this discourse) as the most industrious and most prudent amongst them, although the youngest. He expressed himself in yet stronger terms to Schomberg (whom his majesty visited just before his departure, on account of an indisposition * that confined him to his bed) and to the counsellors he found in the sick count's

* Gaspard Schomberg, count de Nanteuil. This disorder was a difficulty of breathing, that proceeded from the membrano that covers the heart becoming ossaceous on the left side, as also some others of the neighbouring parts; and this was found so upon opening his body after his death, which happened two

years afterwards. He was employed in the making the edict of Nantes, as shall be observed hereafter; and he did many other services to the state. M. de Thou highly commends his character and abilities, both as a warrior and as a statesman.

chamber. He told them, that as I only should bear the blame, if he was not supplied with every thing he had occasion for, while he employed himself wholly in fighting against his enemies, so he was resolved that every thing should be regulated in the council agreeable to my directions. And accordingly, before he went away, he invested me with his whole authority. This mortified Schomberg to such a degree, that he chose rather to go and serve at the siege, than see me at the head of the finances. Sancy likewise left the council, to hold his rank in the army as colonel of the Swiss.

The gentlemen of the council gave me still more reason to suspect them, of which I had a proof in the affair of the third men. After having recorded the edict by which they were created, I endeavoured to raise as much money as was possible from these offices. And to deprive the gentlemen of the council of all means of serving at a low rate, any relation or friend, as was usual with them, I applied myself with as much assiduity to the pen, as any clerk or treasurer *des parties casuelles*; and not satisfied with using this precaution, I gave a note under my hand to each purchaser, who was obliged to carry it to the treasurer, from whom, after laying down the money, he received an acquittance, and both were to be produced to me.

All artifice becoming ineffectual, the contractors had recourse to a method which, doubtless, had seldom failed before; they attempted to corrupt me with bribes. Robert de Tours, a very considerable contractor, after conferring with the council, whom he had gained over to his interest, came to my house, and entreated one of my secretaries to procure him an interview with my wife, to whom he offered a jewel worth six thousand crowns as a present for me, and another worth two thousand for her, that I might not oppose a determination of the council, who had assigned to him the nomination of all the third men in the districts of Tours and

1597. the kingdom, to comply voluntarily with the present necessity of the times, and depend upon his royal word, that the lenders should have their principal reimbursed in the space of two years, together with the interest. His majesty then brought forward the fifteen *sous* upon salt, the establishment of the third man in the finances, and an enquiry into the conduct of fraudulent contractors. The affair was decreed, and a decree drawn up upon that plan. We had, in a very little time, three hundred thousand crowns voluntarily lent: the creation of the third man brought in twelve hundred thousand, and the same sum was drawn from the collectors of taxes, to whom the treasurers of France were joined, but were suffered however to tax themselves.

The council of the finances, accustomed to rejoice in the calamity of the people, were soon comforted under these new subsidies, provided they might pass through their hands. They represented to the king, after having greatly commended his memorial, that the success of it depended upon his employing persons of great experience, ready dispatch, and possessed of a full power to execute it. The king replied, that the person he was resolved to employ should be invested with his authority; and that, with regard to the other qualities, he pitched upon me (I was present at this discourse) as the most industrious and most prudent amongst them, although the youngest. He expressed himself in yet stronger terms to Schomberg (whom his majesty visited just before his departure, on account of an indisposition * that confined him to his bed) and to the counsellors he found in the sick count's

* Gaspard Schomberg, count de Nanteuil. This disorder was a difficulty of breathing, that proceeded from the membrane that covers the heart becoming ossious on the left side, as also some others of the neighbouring parts; and this was found so upon opening his body after his death, which happened two

years afterwards. He was employed in the making the edict of Nantes, as shall be observed hereafter; and he did many other services to the state. M. de Thou highly commends his character and abilities, both as a warrior and as a statesman.

chamber. He told them, that as I only should bear the blame, if he was not supplied with every thing he had occasion for, while he employed himself wholly in fighting against his enemies, so he was resolved that every thing should be regulated in the council agreeable to my directions. And accordingly, before he went away, he invested me with his whole authority. This mortified Schomberg to such a degree, that he chose rather to go and serve at the siege, than see me at the head of the finances. Sancy likewise left the council, to hold his rank in the army as colonel of the Swiss.

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1597. Orleans, for the sum of seventy-two thousand crowns. He was introduced to me by madam de Rosny, whom, by a severe reprimand in the contractor's presence, I made sensible of the fault she had committed. Nor did I spare him, in order to prevent such attempts for the future. He left me greatly surprised, and probably as much offended at my behaviour. I had just been refusing, from another contractor, sixty thousand crowns, for one half of that of which he had before offered me seventy-two thousand for the whole; and that very evening, that half brought me fourscore thousand crowns, because I divided it into small parcels.

This employment detained me at home all that day and the following, for I thought it of more consequence than to attend the chancellor's summons, who had sent a serjeant of the council twice to me, to desire I would come thither, and finish an affair which would procure the king, he said, seventy-five thousand crowns of ready money. I went as soon as I was disengaged, without thinking any more of Robert de Tours. The chancellor, upon my entering the council-chamber, made me some slight reproaches for my negligence: I answered him bluntly, that I had been more useful to the king in my closet. "We have been no less so here," returned the chancellor, who sought to enhance the value of the service he had done the king, in procuring him this ready money, by the necessity his majesty was in for it, having, by two letters successively, demanded some of the council. When I discovered that this was the money which had just before been offered me by the contractor of Tours, he having only added three thousand crowns more to the sum, I represented to these gentlemen, in very strong terms, that since they could not be ignorant that Robert had first applied to me, they ought not to have concluded, without my knowledge, an affair which had appeared to me to be unjust.

Finding

Finding that they were endeavouring to impose upon me, partly by complaint, and partly by an air of authority, I told them plainly, that if I had been of a humour to be gained by bribes, the bargain would not have returned to them; but that since the king relied upon my fidelity, I would not fail to give him every proof of it in my power. The chancellor, Fresne, and La Grange-le-roi, sensibly affected with the reproach conveyed in these words, had the assurance to mention immediately, that a bargain by which the king lost more than half of what was due to him, was, notwithstanding, more advantageous for him, since he was paid with ready money, than mine, by which I commonly allowed the purchasers the term of six months for the payment of the second moiety. They did not stop there, but reproached me with setting myself up for a reformer of the finances; and declared, with an air of contempt, that they were able to support their bargain against mine. Upon this, growing violent, the council determined that their assignment to Robert de Tours should take place.

I did not think proper to say one word more concerning this unjustifiable method of proceeding, nor upon the regulation that was made in consequence of it, which was, that thenceforward the council would have no regard to particular notes. But when Fayet, the secretary, brought me this arret to sign, I refused to do so, till I had received the king's answer to a letter, in which, as I told Fayet, I had suppressed no part of the truth, nor concealed the persons: this letter gave Fayet some apprehensions, as I designed it should; he intreated me to shew it him; and pretending to be overcome by his importunity, I yielded. It turned entirely upon the underhand practices which Robert had made use of to gain the gentlemen of the council; all which I had had the good fortune to discover. I likewise gave the king to understand, that this

1597. contractor had procured the favour of the council, by making to madam de Sourdis*, mistress to the chancellor, the same offers which I had rejected; to which he had added other presents to madam de Detilly, a relation of the chancellor's, and Fresne's mistress. Fayet repeating the contents of my letter to the persons most concerned in it, they sent him back immediately, to intreat I would not send it: the arret was suppressed, and Robert's bargain rejected.

In this manner I divided my labours, between the care of receiving the money of the state, and laying it out advantageously for the necessities of the army, which wanted neither provisions nor artillery during the whole time that the siege of Amiens continued. I took a journey regularly every month to the camp, carrying with me each time fifteen hundred thousand crowns; which procured me the friendship of all the principal officers, who were not accustomed to such exact payments. I extended my cares and solicitude even to the private soldiers, by establishing an hospital in the camp, so convenient and so well attended, that several persons of quality went thither to be cured of their diseases or wounds†.

* Isabel Babou de la Bourdaisiere, the wife of Francis D'Escoubleau, marquis de Sourdis; she had an elder sister, called Frances, who was married to Antony D'Estrées, and mother to the fair Gabrielle; and likewise a younger sister, who married Claude de-Beauvilliers, the count de Saint-Aignan. This whole family was strangely cried down and satirized in the *Amours du Grand Alexandre*, and other sarcastical libels of that time, even as far back as the grandmother of these three ladies, who was called Mary Gaudin. All the daughters of this line were remarkably beautiful. Leo X. was so charmed with the beauty of Mary Gaudin, at Bou-

logne, where he had seen her, when he had a conference with Francis I. that he presented her with a diamond, called by domestic tradition Gaudin's Diamond. It is Amelot de la Houffaye who speaks so; and he has collected several such-like anecdotes of this whole family, to which I refer the curious reader, in the article *Babou de la Bourdaisiere*.

† D'Aubigné relates, that it was commonly said at that time, that Henry IV. had brought Paris with him before Amiens, to shew the abundance that reigned in his camp. He likewise brought his mistress to Pecquigny, at which the marshal de Biron and other general officers murmured very much.

The king's solicitude for the safety of my person, which, indeed, he almost carried to excess, more than compensated for all my trouble. Saint-Luc, to whom the count de la Guiche had resigned the post of great master of the ordnance, took me with him to see his lodgments, knowing my fondness for that part of the military art: this engaged me very far in the trenches and other places in which there was some danger. The king being informed of it, gave me a severe reprimand, absolutely forbidding me to appear at any hazardous post; and said publicly on this occasion, that I had enemies even in the camp, who so eagerly desired my death, they would voluntarily expose themselves to any danger, provided I shared it with them. It was hardly possible for one who had been a soldier, not to feel his former ardour for war revive, near a prince who was equal to every military duty, and performed all with an application so unwearied, and courage so invincible, as might have animated hearts the least sensible of glory.

His example, however, did not produce the same effect upon all. In the very midst of his camp, a cabal of mutinous protestants was formed, headed by messieurs de la Trémouille, de Bouillon, and Du Pleffis, which gave him great uneasiness. Going to pay my respects to him, before I returned again to Paris, I found him in deep affliction: he had just received certain intelligence, that these three gentlemen, in concert with the two Saint-Germains, de Clan and de Beaupré, * D'Aubigné, La-Cafe, La-Valliere, La-Sausaie, La-Bertichere, Preaux, Bassignac, Regnac, Bessais, Constant, and other

* This is the historian D'Aubigné, who is always called D'Aubigny in these Memoirs; his name is Theodore-Agrippa d'Aubigné; his birth, his services, and his courage, gained him great reputation among the calvinist party: he retired in 1620 to Geneva, where he died in 1631, aged fourscore, leav-

ing behind him only one son, called Constant D'Aubigné, whose daughter was Frances D'Aubigné, the late marchioness de Maintenon; Addras de Chaumont, seigneur de la Bertichere, brother to John de Chaumont, the marquis de Guित्रy; his posterity is still extant to this day. Hector de Preaux, &c.

1597. protestants, to the number of twenty, had held an assembly of the whole body of protestant bigots, wherein they had made a proposal, which they supported with all the power and influence they had, to take advantage of the opportunity the siege of Amiens * afforded them, which could not be carried on without their assistance, to force an edict from the king entirely to their satisfaction; or, if he refused, to do themselves justice, by taking up arms against him. Happily for the king, this proposal was objected to by many persons in the assembly, as well as in some of the great towns, which they had endeavoured to draw over to their party. His majesty was a little comforted by this circumstance, but he had reason to apprehend, that the most vio-

* It is certain, that it was by this conjuncture of the siege of Amiens, and the several steps which the calvinists of France took to make their advantage of it, that they obtained the famous edict of Nantes, which was granted them the year following. The duke de Bouillon does not deny this. All the reasons by which he justifies this conduct, may be seen in Marsolier, liv. v. but the best of all is the protest which he and Du Plessis Mornai make, that whatever might apparently be the view of the calvinists in these assemblies at Saumur, London, and Vendôme, that were called together immediately after one another, and conducted with a great deal of warmth, neither they nor the other heads of the party ever had an intention of deliberating therein upon taking up arms, but only amicably to endeavour to obtain equitable conditions. We could wish, solely for the entire justification of the duke de Bouillon, that there had not been reason to upbraid him for refusing to follow the king in his expedition to Amiens; and that the surprise of this town by the Spaniards had not been followed, on

the party of the calvinists, by a translation of the protestant assembly of Vendôme to Châtelleraut, where the proceedings were so violent, that the king was obliged to send thither M. de Schomberg, De-Thou, De-Vic, De-Calignon, and De-Montglat, who were charged with full powers to offer such conditions as sufficiently shew, that Henry IV. thought he had every thing to fear from them. The reason why the calvinists have filled Europe with their complaints about the revocation of the edict of Nantes, is because the intervention of a space of time of upwards of four-score years, has made them lose sight of the means they used at first to extort it. As to the above remark, consult the Memoirs of the duke de Bouillon; his Hist. by Marsolier; the Hist. of the edict of Nantes; the life of Du-Plessis Mornai; the Verbal process of the assemblies of Vendôme and Châtelleraut, &c. but especially D'Aubigné, tom. III. liv. iv. ch. 11. where he relates, at very full length, all the schemes and cabals of the calvinist party, and the new turn which they endeavoured to give their affairs.

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lent party would carry it at last. He commanded me to write to some of the principal amongst them, to prevail upon them, if possible, to resume more reasonable sentiments, and particularly the duke de la Tremouille, whom he knew to be the chief promoter of the conspiracy. 1597.

Hitherto I had preserved some degree of intimacy with La-Tremouille, insomuch that he thought himself obliged to require my presence in these assemblies, but concealed the occasion of them; and in his letter to me made use of such ambiguous terms, as it was not difficult to judge, that I was considered by these gentlemen as a man unfaithful to his own party; and that La Tremouille was not far from engaging in an open rebellion. This did not hinder me, however, from taking advantage of the remaining correspondence there was between us, to endeavour to bring him back to his duty. I wrote to him in answer, that although it were true, the king, in respect to him, was such as he imagined, there was neither honour nor greatness in extorting from him a declaration which was the effect only of necessity; but that, in reality, this prince had the same sentiments as formerly for the protestants; that he was not the cause of that injustice they suffered from the catholics, since he had equal reason to complain of them himself; that besides he should observe, that the consequence of this edict, obtained so unseasonably, would not be so advantageous for them as they imagined, since the catholics, always more powerful than they, were able to prevent it for the present; and for the future, the king, justly offended at their violent proceedings, would lose all inclination to grant them one day, voluntarily, what in so unfavourable a conjuncture they wanted to anticipate by force; and all the effect which an unsuccessful attempt would produce, would be to create a distrust of them in the catholic party, and put them upon their guard against them. I reminded Tremouille of the ex-
amples

1597. examples of those illustrious protestants, who, on all occasions, both by their words and conduct, shewed, that a protestant who acts conformable to his faith, has the good of the state, and the true interest of his king always in view. Tremouille was so little moved with my letter, that he shewed it to every one, and made a public jest of it: but these designs not being supported by a sufficient number of partisans, fell to the ground.

The post of great master of the ordnance became vacant, at my fourth visit to the camp. Saint-Luc*, looking between two gabions where, in appearance, there was scarcely room enough for a cannon-ball to enter, was unfortunately shot dead by one. The king was conversing alone with me when Villeroi and Montigny came to tell him the news, which they would not impart in the presence of any other person, because of the particular designs each had on this post. I came up to the king again when they had left him, and his majesty informed me of Saint-Luc's death, and likewise that Villeroi and Montigny had asked him for this post; the first for his son D'Alincourt, or his nephew Château-neuf-l'Aubepine†, and Montigny for himself. Saint-Luc had genius, readiness of invention, was capable of great industry, and possessed of much personal courage; the only fault he could be charged with, was his resigning himself up too much to a lively imagination, which furnishing him with scheme after scheme, he consumed in theory great part of that time which should have been employed in practice. The king, however, thought none of the candidates capable of filling his place; D'Alincourt wanted fortitude, and, said the king, has no colour on his nails: Chateaneuf‡ concealed his want

* Francis D'Epinaide Saint-Luc: he is called the brave Saint-Luc. See his eulogy in Brantôme's *Vies des hommes illust.* in the article *Saint-Luc*, tom. I.

† Charles de l'Aubepine, mar-

quis de Château-neuf. Francis de La-Grange, seigneur de Montigny.

‡ He was made keeper of the seals in 1630, and resigned them in 1633.

of real genius, under an appearance of affectation and grimace. Montigny was, in truth, valiant, and of warm affections; but these qualities were not sufficient to entitle him to so considerable a post, as he was without expedient, order, or oeconomy.

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His majesty, by talking to me in this manner, appeared to me to have no other reason for hesitating whether he should bestow this post upon me, but because he thought the duties of it incompatible with those of superintendant of the finances. It was not difficult for me to undeceive him; and that instant he promised I should have it; but deferred this proof of his friendship for me, till the siege was at an end, my presence being, in his opinion, necessary at Paris; during which time he would leave the place vacant. I did not see the king all the following day, and unfortunately for me he saw the marchioness of Monceaux in that interval, who omitted nothing to prevail upon him to change his resolution in favour of the elder D'Estrées, her father. The king resisted the intreaties of this lady, and even her tears, but he was not proof to her threats of throwing herself into a convent, if he refused her this favour. The fear of losing her rekindling all the ardours of his passion, she obtained the post for her father. The next day the king, with some confusion for the weakness he had shewn, informed me of what had passed; however, in one circumstance he took care of my interests, by conditioning with monsieur D'Estrées, who was utterly incapable of exercising this employment himself, that he should exchange it for the first post under the crown which should become vacant, and absolutely resign it (if a more considerable war should happen to break out) in favour of him whom his majesty should appoint: and he again engaged his word to me, that I should be the person.

I was satisfied with this assurance, and returned to Paris, where a few days afterwards I received news from the camp of the death of my youngest brother,

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brother, governor of Mante*, whom I had left in good health. Of four brothers his death reduced us to two. The king rejected all the applications that were made to him by several persons for the government of Mante, to bestow it without any solicitation upon me. I received this gift by the same letter which his majesty wrote to me on occasion of my brother's death, together with the writings necessary to invest me with all the rights of my brother, who died without children. I sent Baltazar my secretary to Amiens, to procure my patent for the government, which as soon as I had received, I went to Mante to be acknowledged as governor, designing to stay there but four days.

The gentlemen of the council, supposing my absence would be much longer, and probably followed by a resignation of my employment in the finances, were full of joy; and one of the first advantages they drew from it, was to take proper measures for appropriating to themselves part of those sums destined for the siege of Amiens. They all signed a letter to his majesty, written in the name of the council, in which they represented to him that, having been supplied with every thing that was necessary for the siege during five months, his majesty could not be surpris'd to hear that his funds were quite exhausted, having nothing remaining but some bad arrears and assignments of payment. Henry, who knew not that I was at Mante, and who, by an effect of his ordinary vivacity, had not examined the signatures of this letter, was so much the more surpris'd at it, as I had positively assured him that I was able to furnish him with the usual sums for four months longer, which was all the time the siege was expected to last. He exclaimed in very severe terms against the gentlemen of the council,

* Solomon de Bethune, baron de the beginning of these Memoirs :
Rohy, and governor of Mante. he was only six and thirty years of
This is the third of the four bro- age when he died.
thers, of whom we have spoke in

in the presence of the chief officers of his army; nor for this once was I spared any more than the rest: but after a moment's reflection, casting his eyes upon the names subscribed to this letter, among which he did not see mine, and learning from the courier that I was at Manté, he condemned himself immediately for his too precipitate anger; and that the reparation he made me might be complete, he read my answer to the letter he wrote me upon this occasion, in the presence of the same persons.

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His interest indeed required that he should remove their apprehensions. A siege so extremely laborious had sometimes discouraged both them and their soldiers to such a degree, that an absolute desertion would have been the consequence of his treasure being exhausted, since, upon the least delay of the remittances, the king could not hinder many from leaving him. All went on well to the end; if the besieged defended themselves with vigour, and made sallies upon sallies, they were attacked with the same spirit, and were always defeated.

The sap was carried as far as the ramparts, and the besiegers had just taken possession of two casemates, which they rendered useless to the besieged; when the cardinal archduke, with the count of Mansfield, who served under him in quality of lieutenant-general, thought it time to make an effort to prevent the reduction of the place: they marched towards it with an army consisting of between twelve and thirteen thousand foot, and two or three thousand horse, and passed the river of Authie, with an intention to offer the king's forces battle, or at least to throw a considerable supply into Amiens. All that endeavoured to enter were driven back*. The

* Prefix relates this fact very differently. "The archduke, says he, came and lay before the quarter called Longpré, on the 15th of September, at two in the afternoon, when no-body expected him. He might have

"easily thrown three thousand men into Amiens; so great was the consternation which was spread in the camp. Henry, doubting of the success of that day, spoke out aloud, O Lord (at the same time leaning upon king

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king went himself to reconnoitre the enemy's army: he had a full view of it; and notwithstanding the superiority of their numbers, finding them a confused and disorderly multitude, without discipline or conduct, resolved to attack them; but at the first motion he made, the archduke retreated with precipitation*: probably it would not have been impossible to have forced the Spaniards to a battle, and to have beat them without discontinuing the siege: at least Henry was always of this opinion. Nevertheless he yielded to the advice of the greatest number, who were for allowing the archduke to retreat. After this, they applied themselves closely

" the pommel of his saddle, with
 " his hat in his hand, and his eyes
 " lifted towards heaven) if 'tis to-
 " day that thou intendest to punish
 " me, as my sins deserve, I offer
 " up my life a sacrifice to thy jus-
 " tice, spare not the guilty; but,
 " O Lord, for thy great mercy's
 " sake, pity this poor kingdom,
 " and chastise not the flock for the
 " errors and faults of the shepherd.
 " When he saw nothing appearing,
 " he withdrew dissatisfied, said he
 " gallantly, with the courtesy of
 " the Spaniards, who would not
 " advance one single step to re-
 " ceive him, and who, with a bad
 " grace, refused the honour which
 " he offered them." Prefixe,
 part 2. Most part of the histori-
 ans agree, that the Spaniards let
 slip one of the finest opportunities
 they ever had, of beating the king's
 army: and this prince said himself
 afterwards, that some of his chief
 officers told him all was now lost.
 Matthieu, tom. II. liv. ii. p. 234.

* The king said of the cardinal
 archduke, that he came on like a
 captain, but went off like a priest.
 La Curée very earnestly desired of
 the king, that he would be pleased
 to let him go and discover the pos-
 ture of the enemy's army, putting
 his majesty in mind, that the Spa-
 niards had entered France four

times, and that he had every time
 attacked them, and was the first
 who had beaten them. Henry
 made answer, M. La Curée, don't
 be in a hurry; and at the same
 time he gave him leave. La Curée
 was much spoke of upon this oc-
 casion for his valour, and the noble
 retreat he made before this army
 encamped at Betancourt, four
 leagues from Amiens. However,
 he afterwards said, upon this oc-
 casion, that when three or four
 hundred men retreat in this manner
 before a whole army, it is only the
 fault of that army, if they are not
 cut off. He was an undaunted
 man: for one day he flung himself
 into the midst of the enemy, when
 by his hand being numbed with
 holding his pistol, he could not use
 his sword. There were even wo-
 men dressed like men, who fought
 in the French army: four among
 them were very remarkable, who
 distinguished themselves in taking
 prisoners with their own hands,
 and one especially who went un-
 der the name of captain Gascon.
 These particulars are taken from
 vol. 3929 of the king's MSS. See
 also on this head, tom. vi. des
 Memoires de la Ligue, in which
 are given very high commenda-
 tions of the spirit, alertness, and
 valour of Henry IV.

to the siege. The ravelin having been carried away, and the body of the place beginning to be sapped, Amiens surrendered the latter end of September this year, which had been almost wholly employed in this siege.

When I look upon the great number of letters which I received from the king during the expedition of Amiens, I cannot help being surpris'd that a prince, who had the operations of a great siege upon his hands, and the care of a whole camp, should yet be so attentive to all affairs within his kingdom, and with equal facility and equal diligence acquit himself of such opposite employments. I shall spare the reader the trouble of perusing all these letters, as likewise those which his majesty did me the honour to write to me afterwards. I reckoned above three thousand, without taking in those that I have neglected to preserve, or have been lost through the carelessness of my secretaries. It would be too tedious to give a particular account of each: some of them I suppress in obedience to his majesty's orders, as they regarded persons whose reputation he had no desire to wound, and whom I have doubtless more reason to avoid offending, as I should do by revealing intrigues of state, or merely gallantry, which have still continued secret: as for the rest, they turned wholly upon accounts, application of particular sums, payments, pensions, and other things of the same nature, all of which were so dry and unentertaining, that they afford new matter for praises of this prince.

With regard to his finances, for example, he was so extremely exact as to make me give him an account once a week, of the money received, and the uses it had been put to*. He does not miss to remark that, in casting some cannon, they wanted to rob him of a piece. In a remission of six or seven thousand crowns which he was obliged to

* A hundred crowns could not know whether they were well or be expended, says Perefine, but he will laid out.

1597. grant the people upon the land-taxes, he settles himself the gratification that ought to be repaid to certain parishes which had suffered most. He calculated exactly the number of the offices that were sold, and the money arising from thence. He never forgot any person to whom the state was indebted, or who had done it any service, either in the distant provinces or the neighbouring kingdoms, assigning with the utmost discernment a particular fund for all. His great care was, that the fund appointed for the support of the war should not be broken in upon by any other payment, as appears when he mentions a recompence to be given to the sieur de Vienne, who had brought back the city of Tours to its obedience, or the repayment of four thousand crowns that he had borrowed of madam De Beaufort.

The number of his letters relating to his military affairs are prodigious. He calculated so justly the sums necessary for the making of trenches and other works, together with the soldiers pay, that there was no danger of a mistake in following him. The order he observed in the march of his troops was not regulated with less prudence, than that of the convoys of money which came to his camp, that the one might not be retarded, nor the other intercepted.

All this made up but one part of his cares. The letter wherein he speaks of the repairs of Montreuil, Boulogne, and Abbeville; those in which he expatiates upon the method of maintaining regularity in the provinces, obedience in the cities, subordination in the different bodies, on occasion of the chamber of accounts which had failed in the respect they owed him; that in which he says, "I would not mix the expences of masquerades with these destined for the use of my army;" for Mortier, who had provided dresses for a masque, had caused the money laid out on that occasion to be inserted in a memorial of military expences; that also which contained

contained his reply to the offer which the city of Paris made him by her mayor and aldermen, to support, at their own expence, twelve hundred men, in consideration of which service, he discharged this city from paying the aids a second time, and many other of this kind; all these shew, that the same hand that was able to draw up a plan of attack, was equally capable of conducting the affairs of the cabinet.

The only thing he neglected was his personal maintenance; to make him think of it, Montglar, the first steward of his household, was forced to inform him, as he tells us in some of his letters, that he could scarce make the pot boil any longer. He was not ashamed to confess a thing which affected his domestic enemies only; it was their part to blush that he was destitute of apparel, arms, and horses: however, he afterwards found means to settle a fund for his own subsistence, which could not be confounded with any other; it was the mark of gold arising from the offices which were sold, that he destined for this use. Such were the subjects of many of the letters he wrote me this year, from which the reader may judge of those of the following years, the originals of which I keep with the utmost care, but shall only transcribe the most important amongst them. It is remarkable, that although there are a great number of them, and almost all very long, there are few, however, that are not written with his own hand, particularly those which are directly addressed either to the council or to me*.

* I observed in the preface the reasons that induced me not to transcribe here so many letters. They may be seen at the head of the new collection of Henry le Grand's: the originals of some of them are at this day to be seen in the fine museum of the duke de Sully, with marginal notes written by Maximilian de Bethune's own hand. But the

most valuable pieces in this cabinet, beside a considerable number of original letters of Henry III. and other cotemporary princes, are papers of state, letters, serious or gay pieces, and other fragments, writ by Henry le Grand's own hand, and by his chief minister, or only signed or marked in the margin by them. We have already spoken of those

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I was present at the council which was held after the surrender of Amiens, upon the operations of the rest of the campaign. These propositions were made: to follow the enemy's army, seize some cities of Artois by surprise, and besiege Dourlens * in form: upon which each one that was present gave his opinion; mine was, that it could not be expected the cardinal infant, who had so obstinately refused to fight, when he had no other way of succouring Amiens, should suffer himself to be obliged to come to an engagement now, when he was sensible he should have all the king's forces to encounter, and had had sufficient time to take measures to avoid it; nor was it more probable, that the enterprises upon the cities of Artois should succeed, in the neighbourhood of so numerous an army: yet that either of these designs appeared to me more judicious than the project of laying siege to Dourlens, since that in fifteen days we might know what was to be expected from the former, and incur no shame by failing in them, whereas, by following the latter, we should infallibly have the regret to find that we had consumed a great deal of time, money, and troops, to no purpose. It was resolved, that the two first measures should be suddenly attempted, without renouncing the siege of Dourlens. The Spaniards kept upon their guard, and the French gained no other advantage by this attempt, than the honour of having endeavoured to finish the war by a single action, which contributed as much as all the rest, to make the king of Spain desirous of peace.

It was quite the reverse with the enterprise of Dourlens, upon which they were obstinately bent. The king sent me at Paris, whither I had now returned, his last resolutions on that head. I did not

that concern the accommodation of the admiral De Villars, and other governors and towns, especially in Normandy: we shall have occasion

in the sequel to mention particularly some others.

* A city of Picardy.

scruple

scruple to represent to him, in terms still stronger, the reasons that had hindered me from approving that proposal; that his army, having suffered considerably at the siege of Amiens, was not in a condition to undertake a second equally laborious, in the month of October, a season when the ground about Dourlens, which is naturally fat and viscous, was made impracticable by the rains, and within sight of an army eager to seize an occasion of being revenged. The king did not take my freedom amiss, though he was not convinced by my reasons. He wrote to me in answer, that the expedition of Dourlens was absolutely necessary for the preservation of Amiens and Abbeville: that by putting Picardy in a state of security, he should facilitate the sale of the new offices; and that he would take such measures, that the siege should not continue so long as I apprehended. 1597.

Accordingly Dourlens was invested the ninth of October, and on the thirteenth the rains had so much spoiled the ground and the roads, that the works could not be brought forward. Villeroi informed me in a letter, that they already repented of their attempt: in effect, the king set out almost immediately after, from his quarters at Beauval, and came to Belbat, where he gave orders for raising the siege, at which the soldiers had suffered so much during the short time it had lasted, that they were upon the point of disbanding. The king caused them all to be paid, placed them in winter quarters upon the frontier, left his light horse there, retrenched part of the garrisons which the surprising of Amiens had obliged him to throw into the neighbouring places, and set forward for Paris, to spend the winter there, taking his rout through Rouen and Monceaux, where he staid eight days.

From this place he sent me orders to over-rule the difficulties which the chancellor de Chiverny raised in parliament, to erect his country of Armagnac and Lectoure into a presidial; and to assign

1597. the money arising from it to the payment of costs granted in parliament to the sieur De Fontrailles, count of Armagnac, in a suit which he had carried in that court against his majesty. As the princess might have some claims upon this money, by virtue of the cession her brother designed to make her of all his estates in this province, the king desired me to keep the matter secret, and used the same precautions with Fontrailles and the chancellor, the last of whom observed this command very ill; but his indiscretion had no bad consequence, the princess leaving the court of France a short time after. In the same letter, the king ordered me to pay Demeurat his solicitor at Riom, as likewise La Corbiniere, who was employed to furnish provisions for the troops that were left in Picardy. It was in these intervals from business, that he extended his attention to the most inconsiderable objects. He made me give the sieur De Piles, an old faithful servant, a reward of three thousand crowns, and another of eight thousand livres to Gobelin, to whom, at the same time, he repaid sixteen thousand livres, advanced by him for the support of his household. There was no name, even to that of the poor woman who gathered the taxes at Gisors, which was not mentioned somewhere in his letters.

The poverty of the people*, which was indeed excessive, having produced many blanks in the receipts for the taxes, the king suspected that the gentlemen of the council, who were very zealous in representing and exaggerating these deficiencies, would find means, when they had obtained a discharge for the people, to put large sums in their own pockets, by concealing the discharge that had been granted; he ordered me first to get informa-

* Bougars, describing in his letters the desolation which the civil wars had caused in the kingdom, assures us, amongst other things, that the highways were so over-

run with briars and thorns, that their track could not but with much ado be discovered. Epist. 73. ad Camerar.

tion, whether the people were as much behind hand in the years 1594 and 1595, as those gentlemen had made him believe; which would easily be done, by examining the accounts of receipts and expences given in by the general and particular receivers, and by visiting the courts of the same provinces, whether I was already gone; and secondly to examine whether this deficiency of the taxes did not proceed from idleness in the collectors, and disobedience in the people.

To conclude, his majesty began to busy himself at Monceaux with another matter of importance, that of drawing up articles, on which he desired to come to an agreement with the protestants. This work he pressed for some time upon the chancellor and Villeroy: I was likewise ordered to engage in it; but he would have had reason to complain a long time of the little attention which those men paid to his design, if he had not come himself to Paris to put it in execution*.

For these two last affairs concerning the financiers and the protestants more leisure was necessary than the king, upon his arrival at Paris, was able to afford them. He was obliged to turn his thoughts upon making new preparations for passing the following spring into Brittany, where the rebels, finding themselves out of the view of their sovereign, continued, with impunity, in disorder and disobedience. The duke of Mercœur, who was at their head, durst not openly, however, favour their revolt; on the contrary, the letters he wrote to the king were filled with seeming tokens of submission; and during the space of two years, it had been his whole study to amuse him with feigned proposals which he knew how to evade fulfilling. The king, on his side, had constantly dissembled with the duke,

* He said to a deputation of the townsmen, who came to compliment him after the expedition to Amiens, shewing them the marshal de Biron, "Here, gen-

lemen, is the marshal de Biron, whom I freely present both to my friends and enemies." Peref. part 2.

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and hitherto contented himself with favourably receiving the officers of this province, who, weary of Mercœur's delays, addressed themselves directly to his majesty: but at length, the king thinking it time to go and attack this rebellious subject even at his own doors *, this design, which was carried on with the utmost secrecy, employed us during the whole winter.

It would have answered no purpose to have undertaken it without a body of twelve hundred foot, and two thousand cavalry, and a train of artillery, consisting of twelve cannons at least; and it was not possible to draw out these troops from the six thousand foot, and twelve hundred horse, which his majesty thought necessary for the defence of the frontier of Picardy, and which he had committed to the care of the constable, assisted by the counsels of messieurs Bellievre, Villeroi, and Sillery. New funds were to be found for the support of all these troops; the taxes could not possibly be increased otherwise than by lessening the costs of the collection, which is with respect to the king a real increase. I likewise applied myself to collect the debts that were in arrear, and to recover such as were neglected; to which I joined some new imposts, few in number, and not oppressive.

The king, without these supplies, would have been obliged to have listened to proposals for a peace, and could not then have concluded one, but upon terms very advantageous to Spain. Pope Clement the eighth desired it with great ardour; and, long before the campaign of Picardy, had sent the cardinal of Florence †, in quality of legate, to propose it to the king; at the same time Calatagi-

* One of the duke de Mercœur's friends, having asked him one day, if ever he dreamed of being duke of Brittany, he made answer, "I know not whether it be a dream, but it has lasted these ten years and upwards." The duches

de Mercœur's grandmother was Charlotte, heiress of the house of Penthièvre, whose pretended rights to the duchy of Brittany were apparently the foundation of those of the duke de Mercœur.

Alexander de Medicis.

ronne*, patriarch of Constantinople, went by his holiness's orders to Spain for the same purpose. 1597. The negotiation had been unfortunate in the beginning. The king, more irritated than discouraged by the invasion of Amiens, only answered the cardinal haughtily, that he would defer hearing what he had to propose, till after he had regained this place. The king of Spain on the other hand, although it was with regret that he beheld the war renewed, yet founded great hopes upon his success in Flanders, and particularly upon having surpris'd the city of Amiens, the possession of which might draw along with it that of all the neighbouring country from the Oise to the Seine.

The expeditions of the campaign being more favourable to the French, drew both sides nearer an accommodation. Philip knew Henry to be a prince with whom it was as difficult to keep as to gain advantages, and having besides a foreboding in his own mind, that the illness he was seized with would be mortal, the fear of leaving at his death the prince his son exposed to such an enemy as the king of France, induced him to listen to the advice of Calatagironne, who when he was assured of the king's inclinations, returned to Rome to acquaint the Pope with them, and was by his holiness again deputed to France, to give the cardinal of Florence an account of his success, and act in concert with him.

Accordingly their eminences renewed their former solicitations with Henry, and often represented to him, that the peace, in some measure, depended wholly upon him. The king, who was undeceived in his turn, and no longer influenced by those great and flattering hopes, which, through a reliance upon the promises of his courtiers, he had entertained, saw the return of the two negotiators with pleasure, tho' he appeared indifferent to their proposals: at length he told them, that he would not be

* Father Bonaventure de Calatagironne, general of the order of Saint Francis.

1597. against a peace, provided Spain would give up all she possessed in his dominions. The legates hinted, that this might possibly be obtained. And the king replied, that upon this plan he permitted them to treat and conclude a peace with the three ministers he had left in Picardy, to whom he referred them; in the mean while, that he might not lose the advantage of those preparations he had made for war, nor waste time so precious in mere negotiations, he set out for Brittany.

The king took his rout through Angers, in the beginning of March, ordering his army to follow him by short journies: he permitted his council likewise to attend him, but not till it had made the necessary dispositions for supplying his army in Brittany, and the troops and commissioners for the peace in Picardy, with all things that were needful. As I now had the absolute direction of the council, and met with no opposition whatever, I quickly put matters in such a state as I thought I might join the king without any bad consequence. I expected to have found him already far advanced in Brittany, and was greatly surpris'd to hear, as I drew near Angers, that the king had not left that city. The duke of Mercœur must have been infallibly ruined, but for the service he received from mesdames De Mercœur * and De Martigues † upon this occasion: they began with obtaining, by the interest of the marchioness De Monceaux, a passport to meet the king at Angers ‡; where, as soon as they arrived, they intirely gained over the king's mistress to their party. The duchess de Mercœur offered her only daughter, to be disposed of in marriage to

* Mary De Luxembourg, daughter to Sebastian De Luxembourg, duke of Penthièvre and viscount de Martigues, was wife to Philip Emanuel De Lorrain, duke de Mercœur.

† Mary de Beaucaire, daughter to John, seigneur De Peguillon,

widow of Sebastian De Luxembourg, and mother to the duchess De Mercœur.

‡ They had come thither before the king, but were refused entrance; upon which they withdrew to Pont de Cé, till the king arrived at Angers.

whom-

whomsoever the king thought proper, hinting, to the marchioness, that she would not be against marrying this opulent heiress to her son Cæsar*. The marchioness of Monceaux was so agreeably flattered by this alliance, that from that moment, considering the duke of Mercœur's interests as her own, she solicited for him with the utmost ardour and assiduity: the two ladies likewise employed every art to soften a prince remarkable for his complacency to the sex. He suffered himself to be disarmed by their submissions, promises, and tears, and no longer thought of chastising the duke of Mercœur. 1597.

The moment I alighted at Angers I went to pay my respects to the king. This prince, who by the first word I uttered, and the turn only of my countenance, comprehended all I had in my mind, embraced me closely in his arms, and pressing me to his bosom, "My friend," said he to me, "you are welcome; I am truly glad to see you here, for I have had great need of you." "And I, sire," I replied (incapable of those mean compliances that are dictated by flattery) "I am greatly grieved to find you still here." "It is long," said the king, interrupting me, "that we have learned to understand each other by half a word; I guess already what you would say to me; but if you knew what has passed, and to what a forwardness I have already brought affairs, you would alter your opinion." I replied, that those advantages, whatever they were, which he meant, he might have obtained, and many far more considerable, if, instead of stopping at Angers, he had presented himself before Nantes, at the head of his army. The king endeavoured to excuse himself upon the want of instruments proper for the siege of the city. I answered, that he would have had no occasion for them, because Nantes would have

* "The espousals were celebrated at Angers with the same magnificence as if he had been a law-

fully-begotten son of France: he was but four years of age, and she but six." *Peref. 2d part.*

1597. rendered them unnecessary by a surrender, and perhaps have delivered * the duke of Mercœur into his hands. The first of these things it was highly probable would have happened, and the king acknowledged he believed so. After this confession I added, "It is true, I do not find the bravery of my prince in this instance, but I shall say nothing, because I know what it was that withheld you." With this prince, I was not apprehensive my sincerity would have any bad consequence. He confessed all to me, though with some little confusion, alledging as an excuse his compassion for those who were in a state of humiliation, and the fear of disobliging his mistress.

After this, the conversation turned wholly upon news: his majesty had just received letters from the queen of England, expressing her desire of sending an ambassador to him, to induce him, as we imagined with great probability, to continue the war. By other letters, from Bellievre and Sillery, he was informed, that the legates had offered, in the name of Spain, to restore all the cities, except Cambray, that had been taken during the war. The king's carrying troops into Brittany, without being under a necessity of leaving Picardy defenceless, had given great surprise to Spain, and satisfaction to the court of London, ever solicitous to humble the pride of that crown. I advised Henry not to refuse a peace for the sake of a single city, and to be satisfied with having driven the enemy out of Picardy and Brittany.

This latter province, which had panted for tranquillity a long time, was sensible how much it owed to his majesty, whose presence at the head of an army was the only thing which could procure it

* All the historians agree, that Henry IV. was in a condition to have made the duke de Mercœur smart for his disobedience: he would never suffer that this duke should send him any person in his

name to Vervins; and protested, that he would rather endure a continual war, than consent that one of his subjects should seem to treat with him thus like a foreign prince.

that happiness. The party of Mercœur became the king's party. The Spaniards were not in a condition to hold out long against their united forces. Blavet * and Douarnenes, where they were cantoned in the greatest numbers, could not fail of yielding soon to the common lot, and a few days were sufficient to clear the province entirely of its foreign enemies, who afterwards assembled her states, in order to prove her gratitude to the king, by granting him a considerable subsidy. His majesty commanded me to continue my rout to Brittany, and while I waited there for his arrival, to pay the troops, and quarter them in caserns in the neighbourhood of Rennes and Vitré, with strict orders to keep up an exact discipline there: after which I was to go to Rennes, to represent his majesty's person in the states, to hasten their resolutions concerning the sums that were promised, and use all my authority to facilitate the levying it. The king having an inclination to stay some days longer at Angers, laid hold of the pretence, that something was still wanting to the treaty with the duke of Mercœur.

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I had no reason to be offended with the duchess of Mercœur for having endeavoured to procure the most favourable conditions she could; yet I so far resented her making the king the dupe of her arts, that if his majesty had not obliged me to make her a visit, I would have left Angers without seeing her; although I was related to this lady by the same side by which I had the honour to be allied to the royal family, that is, by the house of Luxembourg †,

The king remonstrated to me, that if the consideration of being related to her, together with the laws of politeness, were not sufficient to induce me

* Blavet is now called Port Louis, and lies in the bishopric of Van- nes: Douarnenes is another port and road, in the bishopric of Quimper.

† Jane De Bethune, daughter to Robert, the sixth ancestor to M. De Sully, was married to John De Luxembourg.

1597. to pay her this respect, yet the duchess of Mercœur deserved it on account of that regard she had for me, which the knowledge of my intentions could not alter. In effect, I was received by her and madam De Martigues with the highest distinction and respect. Madam de Mercœur, after some gentle reproaches for having endeavoured to hurt her interest, and that of her daughter, my little kinswoman, told me, that there was nothing she so ardently desired, as to be able to put the affairs of the duke her husband into my hands, that I might conclude this treaty with the king in whatsoever manner I thought fit. I answered the duchess, that while my respect and adherence to her were not inconsistent with the service of the king, which always carried me against any other consideration, she should find no-body more disposed to serve her than myself.

I went to Château-Gonthier that evening, and reached Vitré the next day, where I saw but too plainly of what importance it was to be extremely cautious and circumspect in quartering troops, that nothing might be neglected. Messieurs De Salignac and De Mouy, marechals de camp, were of great use to me upon this occasion. Tranquillity was so perfectly established in all this part of the country, that the countrymen who at first had retreated to the woods, and fortified themselves there, where every moment they were ready to come to blows, now returned to their houses; and the city of Rennes thought that some acknowledgment was due to me: for this reason, when the states were assembled, a fine apartment was prepared for me during my abode in that city, at the house of mademoiselle de la Riviere: she was a woman of wit and gallantry, who being always looking out for pleasures for herself, was the fitter for the commission with which she was charged, of engaging me in all the entertainments that are commonly found in cities like Rennes, opulent and polite. If the life

life of a minister was to be at all times like that which I led in this city, and which lasted almost six weeks, it would have in reality all those charms which are so falsely attributed to it. I had no other employment than being present at the assembly of the states, who, with all possible gratitude, agreed to the service the king required of them, and granted him, without any opposition, eight hundred thousand crowns; of which one hundred was to be paid the first month, as much the second, and afterwards two hundred each month, till the whole was paid. To furnish this sum, a tax was created of four crowns upon a pipe of wine. The assembly were desirous of adding a present of six thousand crowns to me, which I refused, without examining whether this was among the number of those occasions when I might have been permitted to have accepted a present. The king, to whom the merit of my disinterestedness had been highly exaggerated, and who had himself bestowed more praises on my conduct in the assembly, than it deserved, was resolved, that the expence of a present to me should be his, and instead of six, gave me ten thousand crowns. During six and twenty years, which I had spent in his majesty's service, I had never received so considerable a gift. On this occasion there was a kind of generous contest betwixt the king and the province of Brittany; which at last obtained, that these ten thousand crowns should be added to the eight hundred thousand the assembly had offered his majesty.

The treaty with the duke of Mercœur being completed, the king sent it to the chamber of accounts at Rennes to be registered. As some private articles in this treaty were not expressed, the court thought it had a right to refuse registering it, without certain restrictions with respect to these articles. Henry, who knew better than any other prince in the world, how far the power of these sovereign courts extended, and always appeared careful not

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to make the least encroachment upon it, resented this refusal with becoming spirit; and, together with the dispatches which I received from him regularly every day, he sent me an order in writing for the chamber of accounts, in which he observed, that this court could not be ignorant, that in all treaties or acts relating merely to war or the king's person, the sovereign of France took counsel with no person, nor demanded his letters to be registred but as a formality, which otherwise was little essential; he reproved them for their rash conduct, and ordered them to repair their disobedience by an absolute submission to his will.

The king did not shew less firmness on another occasion which likewise regarded the sovereign courts. These bodies assumed the privilege of furnishing immediately but of half the sum which the assembly had taxed them for their contingent, and endeavoured to take a more convenient and more distant time for the payment of the rest: they made the same difficulties about their share of the necessary contributions for the maintenance of those troops which they had demanded themselves. Henry easily comprehended, that they would not have had recourse to this artifice, but to avoid contributing any thing, as soon as he had quitted the province: therefore he sent me word, that it was his will they should furnish the whole tax; which was done accordingly. Their murmurs on account of paying the troops ceased, as soon as they were convinced that the tranquillity of their province depended upon this regulation, and they were the first after that to approve of my conduct.

These several orders were sent to me from Nantes, to which place the king had advanced, after the treaty with the duke of Mercœur had been agreed upon, to attend to two affairs of importance, namely, the edict for the protestants, and the reception of the two ambassadors from England and Holland. His majesty believing his presence in Picardy was necessary

necessary to forward the peace, intended to have left Nantes in a month's time, without taking a journey to Rennes, which he had looked upon as useless; and had already given orders for the march of the five regiments of Navarre, Piedmont, the Isle of France, Boniface, and Bréauté, which he drew out of Brittany, to fortify the frontiers of Flanders. The king having informed me of his design with respect to these regiments, I represented to him, that the probability of a peace being now changed to an absolute certainty, it was necessary to disband part of his troops, and lessen the number of his garrisons, as being a burden too heavy for the kingdom to support, and that two of those regiments were now sufficient for Picardy; accordingly, only the two first were sent thither, under the conduct of the marechal De Brissac. I even insisted so much upon the necessity there was for his majesty to shew himself at least in the capital of Brittany, that the king, altering his scheme, resolved to come and spend some days there before his return to Paris; and for that purpose, to dispatch, as soon as possible, those two affairs which detained him at Nantes.

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It was now become more necessary than ever, to regulate that concerning the protestants: these people assumed such a licentiousness of tongue in France, that the king himself did not escape the rage and malignity of their invectives. The remonstrances his majesty had made to the authors of the plot before mentioned, were so far from bringing them back to their duty, that, in appearance, it served only to make them use their utmost efforts to bring the whole protestant party in their several synods*, to the most violent resolutions: madam De Rohan did not scruple to cabal with many of them, in order to carry, by a plurality of voices,

* At Saumur, Loudon, Vendôme, and Châtelleraut: of these of the cabals of the protestant party during the siege of Amiens.

we have spoken before, on occasion

1597. the proposal of taking up arms, and forcing the king to receive such conditions as they should prescribe to him; in which attempt she was seconded, with surprising assiduity, by D'Aubigné, remarkable for his satirical turn, and propensity to slander*. It was he who in those assemblies had the assurance to mention, that they ought no longer to place any confidence in a prince who, together with his religion, had abjured every sentiment of his affection, good-will, and gratitude, for the protestants; that nothing but necessity forced him to apply to them and treat them with regard; that when this was over, he would have no longer any care about their consciences, liberties, or lives; that the peace with Spain, which was upon the point of being concluded, would plunge the party into the utmost distress, since the sole motive that induced Henry to consent to it, was to unite himself with that crown and the pope, to sacrifice them to their common hatred; and therefore, that nothing remained to be done, but to take advantage of the king's perplexity during so toilsome a siege†, the distress he was in for money, the need he had of their assistance, and the power which the duke of Mercœur still possessed in Brittany, to obtain by force what Henry would afterwards refuse to grant them.

To incite the members of these assemblies to a revolt, the protestants thought the blackest calumnies were lawful. D'Aubigné was not ashamed to represent Henry there, as a prince to whom all religions were indifferent, and who was only zealous for that which would secure him a throne‡. This was the notion he wanted to give of his conversion.

* He is supposed to be the author of the Confession of Sancy, the Adventures of the baron de Fénéste, and other lampoons.

† The siege of Amiens.

‡ "There are three things," said Henry IV. "which the world is very unwilling to believe; and

"yet, for all that, they are still true and most certain; namely, that the queen of England died a maid; that the archduke is a great general; and that the king of France is a very good catholic." Journal de L'Etoile, p. 233.

According to him, the supposed injuries offered to the protestants left no room to doubt of the new system of politics that Henry had formed for himself. Those injuries opened to D'Aubigné a vast field for exclamation; the least of them were represented as outrages of the most violent nature; and instances of the deepest treachery; and thus, without any regard to the extreme injustice he was guilty of, he placed to the king's account all those hardships which proceeded solely from the catholics or the court of Rome. The duke of Bouillon, leaving others to declaim, supported D'Aubigné, by his uncommon dexterity in sowing division between the king and all that came near him; whether catholics or protestants, and created him sufficient employment, that he might not for a long time be at liberty to turn his arms against him. The taking of Mende by Fosseuse, and the fitting out of the count D'Auvergne, were the consequence of these counsels.

None of these persons neglected to make their court to the ambassadors from England and Holland, as soon as they arrived at Nantes; and depended so much the more upon drawing them into their schemes, as they were not ignorant, that it was particularly recommended to them to prevent a peace with Spain. These ambassadors were, Lord Cecil*, secretary to queen Elizabeth, and Justin de Nassau, admiral of the Republic: they demanded a private audience of the king; or, if that could not be obtained, at least to have no one present but Lomenie and me. But I was then employed at Rennes.

If the two ambassadors had given credit to the protestants, all they had to do was to intimidate the king, and force him by menaces to come into their

* This was not the secretary himself, whose name was William, but his son Robert. De Thou, liv. cxx. See likewise Chronol. Septennaire for the year 1598, concerning this interview of Henry IV. with the English and Dutch ambassadors.

1598. designs; but either this was not in their power, or being convinced of the protestants injustice, they thought it beneath them to be influenced by their passions; and therefore took no notice to the king of what they had suggested. They had indeed offers to make which were much more likely to prevail with a prince whose inclination for war they were not ignorant of: the English ambassador offered, in the name of the queen his mistress, six thousand foot and five hundred horse, to be maintained at her expence; and Nassau four thousand foot, and a large train of artillery completely furnished and supplied, besides a particular supply, which they hinted would be very considerable, provided Henry would endeavour to retake Calais and Ardres. Upon the supposition that the king appeared inclined to accept these offers, the two ambassadors had orders to conclude a treaty of alliance immediately between France, England, and the Low-Countries, against Spain, and to stipulate that neither of these three powers should listen to any proposal, either for a truce or treaty with the common enemy, but with the consent of the two others.

Happily the king escaped this dangerous snare; and the consideration of the present state of his kingdom had more weight with him than all others. He thanked the ambassadors with great politeness, and introduced his answer by assuring them that, although he could not accept the offers of their sovereigns, yet he would not depart from that friendship which had so long subsisted between them; and that the peace he was going to conclude with Spain (for he did not conceal the terms he was upon with Philip) should not hinder him from keeping up the same correspondence with them as before, nor from supplying them with money, when they had occasion for it, with this only precaution, that these loans were taken under the title of acquittances of debts, to give no pretence for a quarrel with Spain.

He afterwards, with the same sincerity, explained to them all his reasons for putting an end to the war. His kingdom, he told them, was not like England and Holland, secured by nature from the attacks of her enemies, but open on all sides; his castles unfortified, and destitute of ammunition; his marine weak, his provinces laid waste, and some of them reduced to mere deserts. He went on to give a more particular description of the abuses which had crept into the government, and introduced a thousand disorders; all subordination being destroyed by the licentiousness that had been practised with impunity amidst the confusion of civil and foreign wars; his power weak and unstable, and the royal authority, as well as the most sacred laws of the state, equally disregarded. These evils could only be remedied by a peace; and if that remedy was ever so little delayed, France was every hour approaching to its ruin; the distemper would soon reach the heart, and no human help would then be able to remove it. Henry did not forget to strengthen these motives, by comparing his present situation, in all these respects, with that of England and Holland, who could engage in a war, on which their safety depended, consistently at the same time with their safety and their interest; and the king drew this parallel with so much clearness and judgment, and so exact a knowledge of the state of those countries, as to make them feel the truth of what he was saying; so that the two foreigners, having nothing to oppose against such convincing arguments, looked upon each other in amazement. The king gave them to understand, that, when he had settled the affairs of his kingdom, he should then, with more assurance of success, renew his former designs against the empire, and the house of Austria; but that these two enterprizes were not of a nature to be executed at one and the same time. The ambassadors, for form's sake, thought they ought to dissuade his majesty from this resolution;

1598. but did it so faintly, being themselves struck with the force of his arguments, that, before the conference was ended, the king brought them over entirely to his opinion, and obliged them to confess, that the peace he was going to conclude was for the advantage of all Europe. They left France soon after, and filled their respective countries with the opinion they had themselves conceived of the great wisdom and extraordinary abilities of the king of France.

In effect, what innumerable miseries would this prince have drawn upon his kingdom, if following the wild emotions of hatred and revenge, rather than the calm dictates of wisdom and prudence, he had at that instant engaged in a war, which, though in his power to begin, was not to end! How dreadful the consequence, if chance, which arbitrarily disposes of all the events of war, should have favoured the enemies of France! But granting that his arms were victorious, how little preferable to a defeat is that success, which a prince must purchase at so dear a rate, as by the alienation of his domains, by the anticipating and mortgaging his revenues, by the ruin of commerce and agriculture, from whence France derives her chief support, and lastly, by the utter devastation of his provinces! Such evils cannot be balanced by the acquisition of new territories, the possession of which keeps the conqueror in perpetual alarms, and, remaining as so many hateful monuments to the enemy of the ambition and injustice of him that gained them, cherishes and keeps alive those seeds of envy, hatred, and distrust, which sooner or later never fail to produce the same miseries with which the kingdom was before overwhelmed: on this account, I am not afraid to say, that, in the present state of Europe, it is almost equally unhappy for its princes to succeed or miscarry in their enterprises; and that the true way of weakening a powerful neighbour,
is

is not to carry off his spoils, but to leave them to be shared by others. 1598.

The insolence of the protestant cabal was totally depressed, when they found that the ambassadors, upon whom they had so greatly relied, were entirely brought over to the king's opinion; and, not doubting but that a peace would now be soon concluded, they thought only of procuring reasonable conditions. It was happy for them that, at a time when it would have been easy to punish them for their unjustifiable proceedings, they had a prince to deal with whose reason was always stronger than his resentment. Both sides were then very industrious to draw up that famous agreement known by the name of the edict of Nantes, by which the rights of the two religions were afterwards both clearly explained and solidly established. Schomberg, the president De Thou, Jeannin, and Calignon, were employed to draw it up, of which all I shall say is, that, by this edict, it was provided that the French calvinists, who till then had been only privileged by truces resumed and continued, should have a fixed and durable establishment*. All that now remained to be done, was to make this treaty to be registered and confirmed by the parliaments and sovereign courts, and to begin with those of Paris; which was deferred till the king's return to that city.

* The edict of Nantes was signed the 13th of April. De Thou says, that the judicial confirmation of it was put off till after the departure of the legate, whom they were loth to send away discontented. The concessions this edict contains more favourable than those that had been formerly granted them are, that thereby they were admitted to places of trust, both in the courts of justice and in the finances: all the rest is no ways essentially different from the edict of pacification that passed in 1577. Bayle ascribes

the honour of composing the edict of Nantes to the reformed minister Chamier. See it in Matthieu, tom. II. book ii. and in several other historians. There were likewise some secret articles, of which the most disadvantageous for the calvinists is that which forbids them the exercise of their religion in a great many towns and particular districts, as Rheims, Soissons, Dijon, Sens, &c. because Henry IV. had so engaged himself by particular treaties before, with the different lords of the league.

1598.

Having paid what he owed to the protestants *, according to the exactest justice, the king thought himself not obliged to shew much regard to those who still continued to stir sedition, such as the duke of Bouillon in particular, who had most reason to reproach himself, and for once, he resolved to speak to him like a master: he had now acquired a right to do this, even though we suppose him not to have had it in the character of king. He proposed as soon as he arrived at Rennes, to execute this design, and took his rout thither without delay. The duke of Bouillon then lodged at the house of l'Alloué, where he was confined to his bed by the gout; the king went to visit him, and after the first compliments, signifying that it was his pleasure to be left alone with the duke, the rest of the company quitted the chamber, and his majesty desired that he would, without interruption, hear what he had to say to him. He began with a particular detail of all his proceedings, to shew that he was not ignorant of any of them: he dwelt chiefly upon some steps the duke had taken since the edict of Nantes, and were therefore so much the more criminal, as it ought to have prevented him from entertaining a thought of revolting against a prince who had so generously adhered to his interest. The duke attempted to offer something in his excuse, but he was stopped by the king, who told him, that without any justification, he would from that day forget all that was passed; and since he had pardoned whatever the most inveterate malice had been able to suggest to his enemies, he had no inclination to exclude from his favour an old servant, with whom he had been pleased for a long time: in conclusion, he advised the duke, with an air of authority, which became him better as he used it seldom, to make good use of the counsel he

* Le Grain mentions a good saying of Henry IV. One day as the protestants were impertinently teasing him with their demands,

“Apply to my sister,” says he to them, “for your affairs are now fallen into the hands of women to conduct them.”

was now giving him as his friend, to think no more of his past behaviour, but for the sake of acting in a manner quite contrary; for if he should again fail in his respect to his king and master, he was resolved to make use of that convenience which the peace now established in the kingdom gave, to bring him to punishment: after which the king, without waiting for his answer, went out and left him to his own thoughts.

1598.

The inhabitants of Brittany were charmed with the affability of their king, and his complaisance in being present at all the entertainments with which the ladies contended to divert him. Henry divided his time between these assemblies, the sport of running at the ring, balls, and tennis-playing, without lessening his assiduity about the marchioness of Monceaux, who was very far advanced in her pregnancy.

In the midst of these amusements, the king at certain intervals appeared so pensive and reserved, that it was not difficult to guess some secret uneasiness preyed upon his mind; and I was the more convinced of it when his majesty, who often diverted himself with hunting, ordered me twice to follow him apart, that he might have an opportunity of conversing with me alone; yet when I did so he was silent. I then remembered that the same thing had happened at Saint-Germain, and Angers; and I concluded that he had a design in view, which he had some difficulty to disclose to me, knowing with what freedom I sometimes opposed his opinions; but what this design was I could not possibly guess. Returning from the abovementioned visit to the duke of Bouillon, his majesty being at the foot of the staircase, saw me as I entered the court, and calling me, made me go with him into the garden, which was extremely large and beautiful, holding my hand with his finger between mine as usual, then ordered the door to be shut, and that no person should be allowed to enter.

1598.

This prelude made me expect to hear a secret of great consequence. Henry did not enter upon it immediately, but, as if he had not sufficient resolution to explain himself, began to tell me what had just passed between him and the duke of Bouillon. This conversation was followed by news relating to the negotiations of Vervins, and led him insensibly to reflect on the advantages France would receive from a peaceable government. One circumstance, the king said, gave him great uneasiness, which was that, not having children by the queen his wife, it would answer no purpose to be at so much trouble to procure peace and tranquility to his kingdom, since, after his death, it must necessarily fall into its former calamities, by the disputes that would arise between the prince of Condé and the other princes of the blood, concerning the succession to the crown. His majesty confessed to me, that this was his motive for desiring, with such ardour, to leave sons behind him. Unless his marriage with the princess Margaret could be dissolved, it was not possible for him to be absolutely happy; but the informations he received from the archbishop of Urbin, messieurs Du Perron, D'Offat, and De Marquemont, his deputies at Rome, of the pope's favourable dispositions in respect to that affair, gave him great hopes of its success: in effect, Clement the eighth, who was as good a politician as any prince in Europe, revolving in his mind what means were most likely to hinder France, and the other christian kingdoms, from falling again into a state of anarchy and confusion, could find none so effectual as to secure the succession of the crown of France, by authorising Henry to engage in a second marriage, which might produce him male children.

Our conversation being fixed upon this subject, it was easy for me to perceive that it was from hence his majesty's uneasiness proceeded; but I could not so soon know what particular circumstance it was that disturbed him. The king began to consider with

with me what princess of Europe he should chuse for his wife, in case his marriage with Margaret of Valois should be dissolved; but indeed he set out with a declaration which shewed any reflections on that head would be fruitless. "That I may not repent," said he, of taking so dangerous a step, nor draw upon myself a misfortune which is with justice said to exceed all others, that of having a wife disagreeable in person and mind, it is necessary that in her whom I marry I should find these seven things, beauty, prudence, softness, wit, fruitfulness, riches, and a royal birth;" but there was not one in all Europe, with whom he appeared entirely satisfied. "I should have no objection to the infanta of Spain," pursued Henry, "although she is a little advanced in years, provided that with her I could marry the Low-Countries, even though I should be obliged to restore to you the earldom of Bethune: neither would I refuse the princess * Arabella of England, if, as it is publicly said, that crown really belongs to her, she were only declared presumptive heiress of it; but there is no reason to expect that either of these things will happen. I have also heard of some princesses of Germany, whose names I have forgot; but the women of that country don't suit me: I should always fancy I had a hog's head of wine in bed with me; besides, I have been told that France had once a queen of that country; who had like to have ruined it: all these considerations have given me a disgust to the German ladies. The sisters of prince Maurice have likewise been mentioned to me; but besides that they are protestants, which would give umbrage to the

* The marchioness Aibelle, or Arabella Stuart. She was daughter to Charles, earl of Lenox, who was grandson to Margaret queen of Scotland, eldest sister to Henry VIII. Her cousin-german James VI, king of Scotland, having in 1602 been

declared lawful heir to queen Elizabeth, the following year a conspiracy was formed in her favour; and she died in 1616, a prisoner in the Tower of London. See the historians.

1598. " court of Rome and the more zealous catholics,
 " they are daughters of a nun; which, together
 " with a certain reason that I'll inform you of some
 " other time, has prevented my entertaining any
 " thoughts of them. The duke of Florence has a
 " niece who is said to be handsome, but she is de-
 " scended from one of the most inconsiderable fa-
 " milies in christendom that bear the title of prince,
 " it not being above threescore or fourscore years
 " since her ancestors were only the first citizens in
 " Florence; she is likewise of the same race with the
 " queen-mother Catherine, who did so much mis-
 " chief to France, and to me in particular.

" These," continued the king, observing that I
 listened attentively to him, " are all the foreign
 " princesses that I have any knowledge of: of those
 " within my own kingdom my niece of Guise would
 " please me best *, notwithstanding the malicious
 " reports that have been spread that she loves *poulets*
 " in paper better than in a fricassée; for my part I
 " not only believe those reports to be false, but
 " should rather chuse a wife who is a little fond of
 " gallantry, than one who wanted understanding;
 " but I am apprehensive that the violent affection
 " she discovers for her family, particularly for her
 " brothers, would create some disorders in the king-
 " dom."

After this the king named all the other princesses
 in France, but to as little purpose: he acknowledged
 that some were beautiful, and genteel, such as the
 eldest of the duke of Maienne's two daughters, al-
 though of a brown complexion, the two daughters
 likewise of the duke of Aumale, and three of the
 duke of Longueville; but all these were either too

* Louisa Margaret of Lorrain: she was a very beautiful princess. It was proposed, at the time of the siege of Paris, for her to marry Henry IV. in order to unite the two parties. The sarcastic lampoons of that time charge her with

carrying on an intrigue with the duke de Bellegarde, master of the horse: and what Henry says here of *poulets*, is taken from a song that was made against mademoiselle de Guise, which may be seen in L'Etoile, for the year 1596.

young, or were not in his taste. He afterwards named mademoiselle Rohan, the princess of Conti's daughter, of the house of Luce; mademoiselles Luxembourg and Guémené; but the first was a protestant, and the second not old enough, and the persons of the two others did not please him: and all for some reason or other were excluded. The king closed this enumeration by saying, that although these ladies might be all agreeable enough to him in their persons, yet he saw no way to be assured that they would bring him heirs, or that he could suit himself to their tempers, or be convinced of their prudence, three of the seven conditions without which he had resolved never to marry; since, if he entered into an engagement of that kind, it would be with a design to give his wife a share in the management of all his domestic affairs: and that, as according to the course of nature he should die before her, and leave children very young behind him, it would be necessary that she should be able to superintend their education, and govern the kingdom during a minority.

Weary at length of endeavouring to no purpose to find out what the king aimed at by this discourse, "But what is it you mean, sire, said I, by so many affirmatives and negatives; and what am I to conclude by them, but that you are desirous to marry, and yet cannot find a woman upon earth qualified to be your wife? By the manner in which you mentioned the Infanta Clara Eugenia, it should seem that great heiresses are most to your taste; but can you expect that heaven should raise a Margaret of Flanders, or a Mary of Burgundy, from the dead for you, or at least restore the queen of England to her youth?" I added smiling, "that for proof of the other qualities which he demanded, I saw no better expedient than to bring all the beauties of France together, from the age of seventeen to that of twenty-five, that by talking with them in person, he might know
" the

1598. "the turn of their temper and genius; and that for
 "the rest he should refer himself to experienced
 "matrons, to whom recourse is had on such occasions." Then beginning to talk more seriously, I declared that, "in my opinion, his majesty might
 "contract his expectations, by striking off a great
 "fortune and royal birth, and content himself with
 "a wife who was likely to keep his heart, and bring
 "him fine children; but that here again he must
 "content himself with mere probability, there being many beautiful women incapable of child-
 "bearing, and many illustrious fathers unhappy in
 "their offspring; but that whatever his children
 "should prove, the blood from which they sprung
 "would secure the respect and obedience of the
 "French nation."

"Well," interrupted the king, "setting aside
 "your advice concerning this assembly of beauties,
 "with which I am mightily diverted, and your
 "sage reflection that great men have often children
 "who possess none of their qualities, I hope to have
 "sons whose actions shall exceed mine. Since you
 "confess that the lady whom I marry ought to be
 "of an agreeable temper, beautiful in her person,
 "and of such a make as to give hopes of her bringing children, reflect a little, whether you do not
 "know a person in whom all these qualities are
 "united." I replied, that I would not take upon
 me to decide hastily upon a choice wherein so much
 consideration was requisite, and to which I had not
 yet sufficiently attended. "And what would you
 "say," returned Henry, "if I should name one,
 "who, I am fully convinced, possesses these three
 "qualities." I should say, sire, replied I, with
 great simplicity, that you are much better acquainted
 with her than I am, and that she must necessarily
 be a widow, otherwise you can have no certainty
 with regard to her fruitfulness. "This is all that
 "you would desire," said the king; "but if you
 "cannot guess who she is, I will name her to you."

Name her then, said I, for I own I have not wit enough to find out who she is. "Ah! how dull are you," cried the king, "but I am persuaded, you could guess who I mean if you would, and only affect this ignorance to oblige me to name her myself; confess then that these three qualities meet in my mistress: not," pursued the king (in some confusion at this discovery of his weakness) "that I have any intention to marry her, but I want to know what you would say, if, not being able to meet with any other whom I could approve of, I should one day take it into my head to make her my wife."

It was not difficult for me to discover, amidst these slight artifices, that his majesty had already thought of it but too much, and was but too well disposed to this unworthy marriage, which every thing he had said tended to justify. My astonishment was indeed very great, but I thought it necessary to conceal my thoughts with the utmost care: I affected to believe that he was jesting, that I might have an opportunity of answering in such a manner as might make the king ashamed of having entertained so extravagant a notion. My dissimulation did not succeed; the king had not made so painful an effort to stop there. "I command you," said he to me, "to speak freely; you have acquired the right of telling me plain truths; do not apprehend that I shall be offended with you for doing so, provided that it is in private; such a liberty indeed in public would greatly offend me."

I replied, that I would never be so imprudent as to say any thing in private, any more than in public, that might displease him, except on such occasions when his life, or the good of the state was in question. I afterwards represented to him the disgrace so scandalous an alliance would draw upon him, in the opinion of the whole world, and the reproaches he would suffer from his own mind upon that account, when the ardour of his passion being abated,
he

1598. he should be able to judge impartially of his own conduct. I shewed him that if this was the only means to which he could have recourse to free France from the calamities a doubtful succession would occasion, that he would expose himself to all the inconveniencies he was anxious to avoid, and others still greater: that although he should legitimate the children he had by madam de Liancourt, yet that could not hinder the eldest, who was born in a double adultery, from being, in this respect, inferior to the second, whose birth was attended with but half that disgrace; and both must yield to those whom he might have by madam de Liancourt after she was his lawful wife: this bye circumstance making it impossible to settle their claims, could not fail of becoming an inexhaustible source of quarrels and war. "I leave you, sire," pursued I, "to make reflections upon all this, before I say any more." "That will not be amiss," returned the king, who was struck with my arguments; "for you have said enough of this matter for the first time." But such was the tyranny of that blind passion, to which he was subjected, that in spite of himself he resumed the discourse that very moment, by asking me if, from the disposition I knew the French to be of, especially the nobility, I thought he had any reason to apprehend they would rise in rebellion, while he was living, if he should marry his mistress.

This question convinced me, that his heart had received an incurable wound: I treated him accordingly, and entered into arguments and expostulations, with which I shall not trouble the reader, since his own imagination may suggest to him all that it was necessary to say upon this subject, which has been already dwelt upon too long. We continued three hours alone in the garden, and I had the consolation to leave the king in a full persuasion of the truth and reasonableness of all I had said to him.

The

The difficulty lay in breaking those too powerful ties; the king had not yet brought himself to that point: he had many dreadful * conflicts of mind to suffer ere that could be effected; and all he could do for the present, was to defer taking his last resolution till he had obtained the permission he had been so long soliciting from the pope, and till then to keep his sentiments secret. He promised me not to acquaint his mistress with what I had said, lest it should draw her resentment upon me. "She loves you," said the king to me, "and esteems you still more; but her mind still entertains some remains of distrust, that you will not approve of my design in favour of her and her children: she often tells me, that when one hears you per-

* In this inward struggle, the voice of reason and decorum had not the strongest sway with Henry IV. and even though M. de Sully does here and elsewhere say it, the world has always been persuaded, upon very good grounds, that, if the death of his mistress, whom he so tenderly loved, had not prevented this prince, he would either have married her, or he would not have married again at all. He was not always directed on this head by the sole advice of the duke de Sully, at least if we believe a very curious anecdote, which may be seen in vol. 9590 des MSS. de la Bibliot. du Roi; where it is observed, that Henry IV. being at Saint-Germain-en-Laye (this was probably but some months at most after his return from Brittany) sent for his three ministers (M. de Rosny, de Villeroi, and de Sillery) to consult with them about this so important a question, relating to his marriage; and that the first (who to be sure was M. de Rosny) was of the same opinion as is mentioned in this place of his Memoirs: that the second advised him on the contrary not to marry, but leave the succession to the prince de Condé, who by birth-right was his true

heir; and that at last the third (this was M. de Sillery, the most artful courtier of the three) in opposition to both the former advices, told him, that the best thing he could do was to marry his mistress, and legitimate the eldest of the children he had by her. Henry IV. continues the author of this anecdote, who plainly shews himself to be a person to whom one of the three ministers themselves had communicated what passed between the king and them) I say Henry IV. seemed surprized at this, and afterwards said, "I had promised myself a great deal from your abilities and fidelity, by the advice I wanted of you with regard to my marriage; yet still I fear, that instead of having satisfied me, you have only increased my irresolution by the contrariety of your opinions, which are backed with such strong reasons, that I find myself not a little embarrassed as to the judgment which I should make as to the best of them; as to that therefore I require a little time to consider of it," &c. and after he had said this, he got up and dismissed them.

"petually

1598.

"pettually talking of my kingdom and my glory, one is apt to think that you prefer the one to my person, and the other to my quiet." I answered, that against this charge I could make no defence; that the kingdom and the sovereign were to be looked upon with the same eyes: "Remember, sire," added I, "that your virtue is the soul which animates this great body, which must, by its splendour and prosperity, repay you that glory and happiness that it derives from you, and that you are not to seek happiness by any other means." After this we left the garden, and it being night separated, leaving the courtiers to rack their imaginations in vain to guess the subject of so long a conference.

Neither the king nor I had attended to a circumstance absolutely necessary on such occasions, which was Margaret's consent to the dissolution of her marriage; I conceived it to be highly proper to enter upon this negotiation while we expected the success of that which was carrying on at Rome. I was willing first to sound the intentions of this princess; therefore the substance of the letter I wrote to her on this subject was, that, most ardently desiring a reconciliation between her and the king, upon which France founded her hopes of having a lawful heir to the crown, I thought it my duty to intreat she would authorise me to use my utmost endeavours to effect this reconciliation; but that, if the inclinations of both parties were such as to render this attempt fruitless, or that it should not conduce to the purpose I mentioned to her (a point I was sensible the sterility of this princess would make her secretly agree to) I hoped she would not be offended if I should afterwards take the liberty to persuade her to make a still greater sacrifice, which the state expected from her. I did not explain myself any farther, but after what I had mentioned just before, upon the necessity of giving legitimate children to the

the crown of France, it was not difficult to guess what I meant by this sacrifice. 1598.

The queen took time to deliberate upon a matter of such importance, before she sent me an answer; which I did not receive till five months after I had written to her: it was dated from Usson*, where she usually resided, and was such a one as we would have wished for, prudent, modest, and submissive. Margaret, without explaining herself any more than I had done, upon a separation that was not yet publicly talked of, was contented with substituting, instead of it, an assurance that she would readily submit to the king's will; adding the most candid praises of his conduct, and thanks to me for my solicitude and cares.

The king staid at Rennes but seven or eight days, resolving to set out as soon as possible for Paris, that he might reach Picardy the beginning of May: he took his rout through Vitre†, from whence I received orders from him to give a gratuity to the garrison of Rochefort, and afterwards to cause the castle to be razed. From Vitre his majesty coasted along the Loire, and came to Tours, by the way of La Fleche, which he took pleasure in seeing again, it being the place where he had passed part of his time in his youth.

I staid behind him at Rennes five or six days, to put the affairs of the finances in order, pay the troops, settle their departure from Brittany, and their march through the midst of the provinces, after which I came to Tours to the king; his majesty having sent for me upon an affair of great importance. I left him to continue his journey to Pa-

* This princess had at first retired, many years before, to Agen, and afterwards to Carlat. King Henry III. her brother, had not treated her better than Henry IV. her husband, but persecuted her every where, and at last shut her up in the castle of Usson in Au-

vergne, where, after his death, she was contented to live.

† I have substituted this word in the place of that of Villeroi, as the original bears: there never was a place of that name in Brittany; and, in fact, Henry IV's road lay through Vitre.

1598. ris, whither (notwithstanding all the haste he was able to make) he did not arrive till the latter end of May. I was so weary * of the formality of our reception into the great cities, and particularly of the long speeches that we were tormented with in every place, that taking a bye-road by le Maine and le Perche, I came alone to my estate at Rosny, where my wife was employed in attending the building of a house, and had narrowly escaped being crushed to pieces under the ruins of the old edifice, which was first to be demolished. I staid there but a short time, yet upon my arrival at Paris, I found the king was gone from thence; he had only passed through it, and taken the road to Amiens immediately: this city he thought convenient for corresponding with the plenipotentiaries of Vervins, and likewise for visiting all the fortresses upon the frontiers, to facilitate the evacuation of those that were to be restored to him by the treaty, and to provide for their security for the future. All this was but the work of eight days, and his majesty was no sooner come to Paris than the treaty was signed †.

* The king was no less so. L'Etoile relates some very smart repartees of his majesty to these importunate haranguers; one of them tired him with long titles and compellations of honour, and repeating often, "O very benign, O very great, O very merciful, &c. king." "Add too, says Henry to him, and very weary." Another having begun his speech with these words, "Age-silaus, king of Lacedemon, fire," &c. The king, interrupting him, says, "*Ventre, saint gris!* I have heard a good deal spoken of this Agesilaus, but he had dined first; but, for my part, I have not yet." Having twice told another, that he should cut short his harangue; and seeing that he went on tediously nevertheless, he left him, and so went

away, telling him, "You must say the rest then to master William," meaning the fool that belonged to the court.

† On the 2d of May, 1598, the peace was signed, in the name of the king, "by M. Pomponne de Bellievre, knight, lord of Grignon, and counsellor of state to the king, and Mr. Nicholas Brulart, kt. lord of Sillery, counsellor of state to the king, and president in his court of parliament at Paris. In the name of the cardinal of Austria, having full powers from the king of Spain, by M. John Richardot, knight, chief and president of the privy council of his said majesty, and one of his council of state: M. John Baptiste de Taxis, knight, &c. and M. Louis Verreiken, knight," &c. See this

The treaty was very clear and plain: the resignation of all the towns and fortresses that Spain possessed in France was almost the only considerable article in it. No difficulty arose concerning the affair of the marquisate of Saluces; the king did not think fit to break off the peace on account of this article, which was looked upon to be of so little importance, that if Savoy should refuse to do justice in it, the king, it was said, might, with very little trouble, seize the whole territory without any obstruction from Spain. Both parties, however, obliged themselves to stand to the pope's * decision of the affair. Here the plenipotentiaries committed an error, which was the cause of engaging his majesty soon after in a war that might have been avoided. I shall take no notice of the rest of those formalities in use amongst them †, and leave it to others to extol those refined stratagems that in politics are thought the masterpiece of human wit.

whole treaty in the *Memoires & negotiations de la paix traitées à Ver- vins*, tom. II. with an account, in form of a journal, of all that passed between the plenipotentiaries, from the opening of that negotiation till the conclusion of the peace.

* What regards the duke of Savoy, who was represented by M. Gaspard de Geneve, marquis de Lullin, and counsellor of state, &c. is at the end of the 24th article, and imports, "that the remainder of the other differences that are between the said most christian king and the said duke, shall be referred to the judgment of our holy father Clement VIII. to be determined by his holiness within one year. . . . And matters shall continue in the state in which they are at present," &c.

† There were found the same difficulties as to the substance, and the same obstacles as to the formalities that are usually to be met with in such sort of deliberations. They may be seen in the *Lettres de M. de Bellievre & de Sillery*, and in the *Relation*, &c. *ibid.* These two negotiators have been generally commended for the firm and wise conduct which they shewed therein. In their letters, and among others, in those dated the 7th of April, and 4th of March, they give a particular detail of the motives that induced them to conclude with the agents for the duke of Savoy in the manner which M. de Sully complains of: and all this they did by the particular orders of his majesty, in his letter of April 9, &c.

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The king signed the treaty at Paris, in the presence of the duke * d'Arscot and the admiral of Arragon; the arch-duke did the same at Brussels, in the name of the king of Spain and his own, before marechal Biron, on whom the king, to qualify him for this ceremony, had just bestowed the rank of duke and peer of France, a dignity that completely turned his head. Messieurs De Belliévre and De Sillery were likewise present. The duke of Savoy gave his solemn assent to the peace at Chambery, in the presence of Gadagne Bothéon †, governor of Lyons, who was deputed to him by the king for that purpose.

Thus, notwithstanding a league so powerful as that of the pope, the emperor, the king of Spain, the duke of Savoy, and all the ecclesiastics of christianity, did the king of France accomplish his designs ‡, and crown them with a glorious peace: all those who had been employed in effecting it he rewarded with a royal munificence; and to prevent this measure from alienating Holland from his inte-

* Charles de Croy, duke d'Arscot and prince de Chimay; Don Francisco de Mendoza and Cardona, admiral of Arragon. Henry IV. took an oath for the observing of the treaty of peace on Sunday the 21st of June, the cardinal De Florence, the pope's legate, officiating in the most solemn manner. The account is also to be met with, *ibid.* tom. II. p. 266. of the MSS. de la Bibliot. du Roi, vol. 9361. *Mem. de la ligue*, tom. VI. *Mem. de Nevers*, tom. II. *Matthieu*, tom. II. liv. ii. Cayet, and others.

† He is styled, in the oath taken by the duke of Savoy on the 2d of August, "the illustrious lord, William de Guadagn, lord of Botheon, knight of the orders of the most high and most excellent prince Henry IV. the

most christian king of France and Navarre, counsellor in his council of state, captain of fifty gen-d'armes, and his lieutenant-general in the government of the Lyonnais, Forêt, and Beaujolois, ambassador, intrusted and deputed," &c. *Mem. & Negotiations*, &c. tom. II. p. 365.

‡ The letters which this prince wrote to his two ministers at Verbins, during all the time that this negotiation lasted, confirm this. They are inserted in the *Mem. & Negotiations*, &c. *ibid.* He says, "that with one stroke of his pen he had performed more exploits than he could have done during a long war with the best swords of his kingdom." It was also said, upon this treaty, that the Spaniards had got the better by arms, but the French by negotiation.

rests, he sent Buzenval to Amsterdam, to keep up a good intelligence with the States, and to pay the pension his majesty allowed them. It is not possible to reflect on the great abilities of this prince, and his surprising diligence in shewing himself in every part of his kingdom where his presence was the least necessary, without giving him those praises he so well deserves.

M E M O I R S

Q F

S U L L Y.

B O O K X.

1598. **P**EACE brought with it other labours and other cares. The king began by reducing the number of his troops, both French and foreigners: the Swiss, except three companies of an hundred men each, commanded by the colonels Galati, Heid, and Baltazar, were disbanded. This reduction was not so complete as I could have wished, and the necessity of the times seemed to require; but my advice on this head was not approved by his majesty: however, if it had been considered that the royal treasure was almost exhausted, and yet there was an absolute necessity of furnishing money for many occasions so urgent, that new sums were obliged to be borrowed for that purpose, I am of opinion that I could not have been reproached with a sordid and misplaced œconomy.

These sums were to be applied to the fortifying a great number of towns, and the repairing of many buildings, that by the late disorders of the times were threatened with approaching ruin, which it was necessary to prevent without delay. Upon visiting the chief rivers of the kingdom, to settle the different claims (a business which was trusted to four per-

persons of known probity) it was likewise found necessary to raise several works, particularly upon the Charente. 1598.

Amongst other political regulations which were thought necessary to be made, the king set bounds to that prodigious quantity of grain, which it was usual to send out of the kingdom, and which often exposed France to suffer the greatest inconveniencies from a scarcity of her own produce *: by another regulation, all that had no right to wear swords † were forbid, upon pain of the severest punishments, to appear in them.

* The most just consequence which it would seem can be drawn from all the reasonings we read and hear daily upon this point, namely of exporting corn out of the kingdom, is that which the duke de Sully infers here. It would be unreasonable to deprive this kingdom of one of the most happy resources and one of the richest supports of its commerce, by forbidding all exportation of this sort of commodity: and it would be no less imprudent to allow it without measure or proportion.

If to find this proper medium, the public and royal magazines do not appear to be an answerable and sufficient expedient, by reason of the great expences and still greater inconveniencies that attend them; it would seem that the same objection cannot be made against commissaries that might be established to take care that the granaries of private persons might be filled, opened and shut, whenever the public exigencies required it. This part of political oeconomy, whose great and almost sole view should be to know and to keep up the proportion betwixt the productions of the earth and their consumption, by fairly balancing the different years and different provinces, is not, I believe, so difficult as at first it appears.

† As to the regulation of carrying arms, several persons are of opinion that it would be proper to add some distinguishing marks in the form of the cloaths, that might serve to make known in public the different ranks of people.

As to arts and sciences, and the belles lettres: if it be true, as it appears, that it cannot be doubted, that it is to the care that has been taken for some years past to cultivate them in Europe, we owe the difference that may at this day be observed among Europeans, with regard to the softness of their manners, the politeness of their behaviour, their connexion with each other, and the means which a more pacific spirit has found out to discuss and terminate, in a less cruel manner, their respective differences: it appears that, by all kinds of public motives, independently of that of the glory and particular interest that results from it, a great state ought not to lose sight of this object. After all the care which has been already taken in this kingdom, in order to form and establish a library, museums, and collections of all kinds, that might be worthy of the powerful monarch that rules it, to institute academies where persons apply themselves to improve the arts and sciences; the world expects with impatience to see the design executed that was

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Amidst these occupations, polite literature was not excluded from a share of the king's attention. He heard Casaubon mentioned, and upon the reputation of this learned man, he invited him to come and settle in Paris with his family, where he fixed him by a pension that afforded him the means of living as became a man of his character, who is not called, said Henry, to govern a state.

I am under a necessity of suppressing a detail of less important incidents, the number of which would be infinite, were I to recount in these Memoirs all that his majesty said or wrote to me from Fontainebleau, Monceaux, and Saint-Germain-en-Laye, where he passed the remainder of this year, and where, from time to time, he commanded my attendance to confer with me upon different occasions. I shall exactly fulfil my former promise, in suppressing all that are not in themselves of some consideration; and shall only observe here, that perhaps no minister of state ever found in his prince more attention, or more readiness of expedience, with respect to all that could promote either the advantage or the mere convenience of a kingdom, than I found in the prince whom I served. Neither peace, nor domestic affairs, made him neglect to observe what was doing in the neighbouring courts: the question about the true or false Don Sebastian * made then a

formed some time ago, namely to accommodate all these different parts a little more to one another, in such a large town as Paris, by bringing them all within the same walls, where one might conveniently find all, at once, as books, instruments, printing-houses, and in general, all the necessary implements, together with proper accommodations for lodging the persons appointed and set over to inspect and take care of them; and especially, to see established a tribunal of arts and sciences, consisting of proper persons in the different academies, and paid by his majesty, to make exact trials, and form a pre-

cise judgment concerning books, discoveries, and productions that might be useful to the public. At first there was an intention to make the square or place Vendôme serve for this purpose; after this the Old Louvre was pitched upon: but exigencies of state that are still more necessary to be attended to, have ever since made the execution of this project be deferred.

* This question seems at present to be pretty well decided, by the authority of far the greatest part of the best historians, who make no doubt but that king Sebastian lost his life in the battle he fought with the Moors at Alcazar, in 1578; and

great

great noise in Europe as well as in Spain. He sent La Tremouille * into Portugal, to endeavour if possible to unravel the mystery, that he might not, but upon full conviction, determine upon the justice or iniquity of the council of Spain, which had begun their measures by causing the supposed king of Portugal to be arrested. 1598.

Henry, not having yet explained himself concerning those great schemes which he afterwards formed against the house of Austria, was desirous of acting this year as a mediator between Spain and England; he therefore proposed a conference to be held at Boulogne † between the two crowns, and sent Caumartin and Jeannin, to assist at it in his name. It was in vain that I opposed a measure, which seemed to me to be founded in very bad policy; happily, however, this conference produced nothing that had been expected from it. The obstinate hatred these two nations bore to each other, gave rise immediately to so hot a dispute about precedency, that they separated before they had even begun to settle the smallest preliminary.

The jesuits were not more fortunate in their endeavours to take advantage of that article in the treaty of Vervins, by which all French exiles as well as foreigners were at liberty to return into France and settle there; the arret of council which intervened, deprived them of this resource, and they were

consequently that this pretended Don Sebastian was but an impostor, supported both at that time and since by the enemies of Spain. See the proofs of this king's death in M. De Thou, book lxxv. of which we shall say more in the sequel. France could besides have meddled in this question another way. Catherine de Medicis pretended to have a rightful title to the crown of Portugal, alledging that she was descended of Robert, son to Alphonso III. by Maude his first wife, who died in 1262. Since which

time she maintained, that all the kings of Portugal were no other than usurpers: but as these were points very difficult to be decided, it appears, that she made but little progress in making good her pretensions.

* Claude de La Tremouille, duke de Thouars, who died in 1606.

† This conference or congress, into which were admitted the states of the United Provinces, was not held till the year 1599, in the months of May and June.

obliged

1598. obliged to make use of other means that succeeded better.

The assembly of the clergy which was held this year, and continued part of the following, shared likewise his majesty's attention, as well as the promotion of cardinals. The son of madam Sourdis* was one of those Frenchmen for whom the king procured a hat, although he was too young to be thought worthy of that distinction. Madam de Sourdis owed this favour to the duchess of Beaufort's interest, whom she prevailed upon to support her request.

This was the title the king's mistress now bore, for which she quitted that of marchioness of Monceaux, when the birth of a second son drew from his majesty an increase of tenderness and honours. This lady had for a long time set no bounds to her ambition; she aspired to nothing less than being declared queen of France; and Henry's passion for her, which increased every day, gave her hopes of accomplishing her designs. When she was informed that the king's agents at Rome were commissioned to solicit the dissolution of his marriage with Margaret, and that his majesty was on the point of sending the duke of Luxembourg†, to that court with the title of ambassador, to hasten the conclusion of it, she looked upon this as a favourable opportunity; but suspecting the agents and probably the new ambassador, she cast her eyes upon Sillery, who was already deep in her interest, and whom this last instance of confidence would not fail of binding still closer to her service: she sent for him, and explaining her views to him, set no bounds to the reward which she pretended to give for his service and devotion. As she knew what was most likely to tempt Sillery, she assured him of the seals at his return from Rome, though at the hazard even of disobliging Madame

* Francis d'Escoublau, cardinal de Sourdis, and archbishop of Bourdeaux, who died in 1628.

† Henry de Luxembourg, duke de Piney, who was the last of that branch of Luxembourg.

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de Sourdis her aunt and intimate friend, and promised him likewise the post of chancellor, as soon as it should be vacant. At this price Sillery engaged, with all the oaths she demanded from him; to neglect nothing that might prevail upon the pope to legitimate the two children she had by Henry, and to dissolve his marriage with Margaret. This first step taken, few obstacles remained to hinder her advancement to the throne. She easily found reasons to make the king approve of the ambassador she had chosen; the duke of Luxembourg was only suffered to set out, to be recalled as soon as Sillery should be in a condition to take his place. The duchess was at no pains to conceal from the court the title with which she had just graced her favourite; she assisted herself in preparing his equipages, and prevailed upon the king to give the necessary orders for Sillery's appearance with all the pomp and magnificence, by which the success of his negotiation might be secured.

The duchess of Beaufort at the same time, to prepare the French for that change which she meditated for her children, obtained of the king, who had no less tenderness for them than for the mother, that the ceremony of the baptism of the second son she had lately born him, should be performed at Saint-Germain, where his majesty then was, with the same magnificence and honours which in this ceremony are only used to the children of France. Though I could pardon in this lady an intoxication in which she was kept by the servile respect the courtiers paid to her children, and the adorations they offered to herself, I could not have the same indulgence for Henry, who was so far from taking any measures to undeceive her, that he gave orders for the baptism of this child, with a readiness that shewed how agreeable the request was to him. I declared my sentiments of this proceeding with great freedom; I endeavoured publicly to oppose the inference which I perceived the courtiers would draw, in favour of children

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children so dear to the king, for the succession to the crown. The king himself, after the ceremony, became sensible that he had permitted too much, and told me that they had exceeded his orders; which I had no difficulty to believe. The child was named Alexander*, as the eldest had been Cæsar; and the court flatterers, by a kind of second baptism, gave him the title of *Monsieur*, which in France no one is allowed to bear but the king's only brother, or the presumptive heir to the crown.

The mistress did not stop here; she began to assume all the airs of a queen, not indeed wholly through her own presumption, for I think she knew herself too well to have indulged such extravagant ideas, but was driven on to take that step by the continual solicitations of her creatures and relations: madam de Sourdis, Chiverny, and Fresne, seconded her so well on their parts, that it became insensibly the public talk of the court, that the king was going to marry his mistress; and that it was for this purpose he was soliciting his divorce at Rome. I was shocked at a report so injurious to the glory of this prince: I went to him, and made him sensible of the consequence of it. He appeared to me concerned, and even piqued at it; yet his first care was to justify madam De Beaufort, who, he positively assured me, had not contributed to the report; for which all the proof he had was that she had told him so: he threw the whole blame upon madam de Sourdis and Fresne, to whom he shewed that he was capable of pardoning a conduct so little respectful to him, since, although he was assured they were guilty, he gave them not the slightest reprimand.

One circumstance added great weight to the steps I took on this occasion both in public and private. Queen Margaret, with whom the affair of the approaching dissolution of her marriage obliged me to

* They gave him the title of chevalier de Vendôme. Lady Catherine, sister to the king, and the count de Soissons, were the sponsors at his christening. He died grand prior of France, in 1629.

keep a correspondence by letters, was the last who heard of what was said and done at court, with regard to madam De Beaufort's pretensions: As soon as she was informed of them she wrote to me, and gave me to understand, that she had not changed her mind with regard to a separation from the king, but that she was so much offended at their intending to give the place she resigned to a woman so infamous as the duchess was by her commerce with the king, that, although she had at first given her consent without annexing any conditions to it, she was now determined to insist upon the exclusion of this woman; and no treatment whatever should oblige her to alter her resolution. I shewed this letter to the king, who judging by it how much his marriage with his mistress would irritate the best of his subjects against him, began, in reality, to change his sentiments and conduct.

I was of opinion, that if madam De Beaufort was acquainted with the contents of this letter, it might probably produce the same effects upon her. I would not take this trouble upon myself, being unwilling to meet the insolence and rage of a woman, who looked upon me as a stumbling-block in the way of her advancement, but I communicated the letter to Chiverny and Fresne, who immediately informed madam De Sourdis of it, and she almost in the same moment the duchess of Beaufort. But this lady's counsellors were not so easily alarmed; they were very sensible that the design they had undertaken to engage the king in, could not fail of meeting with many difficulties, and they had settled their behaviour upon each; the result of their deliberations had been, to hasten, as much as possible, the conclusion of the affair; persuading themselves that when it was once over they might give it a colour that should make it excusable; or, at worst, matters would be composed after a little murmuring, as always happens when things are without remedy. They knew well the disposition of the French nation, especially

1598. especially the courtiers, whose first law it is to be always of the same mind with the sovereign, and whose strongest passion the desire of pleasing him. In a word, they thought themselves secure of every thing, provided the king himself did not fail them. Fresne having drawn up the warrant for the payment of the heralds, trumpeters, and other under-officers of the crown, who had attended at the ceremony of the baptism, it was brought to me, as well as the rest, that I might give my order for its discharge. As soon as I cast my eye upon this writing, a tender concern for the king's honour made me look upon it as a lasting testimony of his weakness, which was going to be handed down to posterity. I hesitated not a moment to return it, and caused another to be drawn up in terms more proper. The titles of Monsieur, Son of France, and all that could give any notion of that kind, were suppressed, and consequently the household fees reduced to the ordinary price, with which they were highly dissatisfied. They did not fail to renew their efforts: and in their discontent quoted Monsieur de Fresne, and the law by which their claims were regulated: At first I restrained myself before these people, whose bad intentions I well knew; but growing impatient at last, I could not help saying to them, with some indignation, "Go, go, I will do nothing in it; know that there are no children of France."

No sooner had these words escaped me, than, suspecting that a troublesome affair would be made of it, to prevent it, I went immediately to his majesty, who was walking with the duke D'Epernon in the palace of St. Germain: I shewed him the warrant Fresne had drawn up, telling him, that if it was allowed, there needed no more but to declare himself married to the duchess of Beaufort. "This is Fresne's malice," said the king, after he had read it: "but I shall take care to prevent it." Then, commanding me to tear the paper, he turned to three or four lords of the court who were nearest him,

him, "How malignant are these people" said he aloud, "and what difficulties do they throw in the way of those who serve me with fidelity: they brought a warrant to monsieur De Rosny, with a design to make him offend me if he passed it, or my mistress if he refused it." In the state affairs then were, these words were far from being indifferent; they gave the courtiers, who had smiled at my simplicity, to understand that they might possibly be deceived themselves, and that the supposed marriage was not so near as they had imagined. The king continuing to converse with me apart, told me, that he did not doubt but that madam De Beaufort was greatly enraged against me, and advised me to go to her, and endeavour, by solid reasons, to give her satisfaction: "If they will not do," added he, "I will speak to her as her master."

I went directly to the duchess's apartment, which was in the cloister of Saint-Germain. I knew not what notion she conceived of a visit which she found I began with a sort of explanation: she did not allow me time to go on: the rage with which she was animated not permitting her to observe any measures, she interrupted me with a reproach that I had imposed upon the king, and made him believe that black was white. "'Tis well, madam!" said I, interrupting her in my turn, but with great calmness, "since you think fit to talk in this manner, I shall take my leave, but I shall not, however, neglect to do my duty." Saying this, I left her, not being willing to hear more, lest I should be tempted to say something more severe. I put the king in a very ill humour with his mistress, when I repeated to him what she had said. "Come along with me," said the king, with an emotion that pleased me greatly, "and I will let you see that women do not wholly possess me." His coach not being ready soon enough for his impatience, his majesty got into mine: and as we drove to the duchess's lodgings, he assured me that he would never have cause to re-
proach

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proach himself, that, through his complaisance for a woman, he had banished or even disgusted servants, who, like me, were only solicitous for his glory and interest.

Madam de Beaufort, upon my leaving her apartment so hastily, had expected to see the king soon after: and during that time had taken sufficient pains to set off her person to the greatest advantage; believing, like me, that the victory which one or other of us must now gain, would be the presage of her good or bad fortune. As soon as she was informed of the king's arrival, she came as far as the door of the first hall to receive him. Henry, without saluting her, or expressing any part of his usual tenderness, "Let us go, madam, said he, to your chamber, and suffer no one to enter but yourself, Rosny, and I; for I want to talk to you both, and make you live together upon friendly terms." Then ordering the door to be shut, and that no one should be suffered to remain in the chamber, wardrobe, or closet, he took her hand, holding one of mine at the same time, and with an air which she had good reason to be surpris'd at, told her, that the true motive which had determin'd him to attach himself to her, was the gentleness he had observed in her disposition; but that her conduct for some time past had convinced him, that what he had believed to be real was only disssembled, and that she had deceived him: he reproach'd her with the bad counsels she had listened to, and the very considerable faults they had occasioned. He cover'd me with praises, to shew the duchess, by the difference of our proceedings, that I only was truly attached to his person: he commanded her to get so far the better of her aversion for me, as to be able to regulate her conduct by my advice, since, she might depend upon it, his passion for her should never induce him to deprive me of his confidence.

Madam de Beaufort began her answer by sighs and tears; she assumed a tender and submissive air;

• she

she would have kissed the hand of Henry; omitting no artifice which she thought capable of melting his heart. It was not till she had played over all these little arts, that she began to speak, which she did by complaining, that instead of those returns she might have expected from a prince to whom she had given her heart, she saw herself sacrificed to one of his grooms: she repeated all that I had said or done to the prejudice of her children, in order to awake his majesty's resentment against me: then, feigning to sink under the violence of her grief and despair, she let herself fall upon a couch, where she protested she was determined to wait for death, not being able to endure life after so cruel an affront. The attack was a little strong; Henry did not expect it: I observed him heedfully, and saw his countenance change; but recovering himself immediately, that his mistress might not perceive it, he continued to tell her in the same tone, that she might spare herself the trouble of having recourse to so many artifices on so slight an occasion. Sensibly affected at this reproach, she redoubled her tears, crying, that she plainly perceived she was abandoned, and that doubtless it was to augment her shame and my triumph, that the king had resolved to make me a witness of the most cruel treatment that was ever shewn to any woman. This thought seemed to plunge her into a real despair. "By heaven madam," said the king, losing patience, "this is too much; I know to what all this artifice tends; you want to prevail upon me to banish a servant whose assistance I cannot be without: I declare to you, if I was reduced to the necessity of chusing to lose one or the other, I would rather part with ten mistresses like you, than one servant such as him." He did not forget the term of groom which she had made use of, and was still more offended, that she had applied it to a man whose family had the honour of being allied to his own.

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After this harsh speech the king suddenly quitted the duchess, and was going out of her apartment without seeming to be moved at the condition he left her in; probably because he knew her well enough to be assured that all this violence of grief was affectation and grimace. As for me, I was so far deceived by it, as to be greatly concerned for her; and was not drawn out of this error till madam de Beaufort, perceiving the king was going to leave her so much offended, that she had reason to apprehend he would never return again, changed her behaviour in an instant, ran to stop him, and threw herself at his feet; no longer to impose upon his tenderness, but to sooth him to a forgetfulness of her fault: she began by apologising for her past conduct; assumed an air of gentleness and complacency, and swore she never had, nor ever would, have any will but his. Never was there a change of scene more sudden: I now saw a woman perfectly agreeable, easy, and compliant, who behaved to me as if all that had just passed had been a dream; and we separated very good friends.

The king being at Monceaux about the end of October, felt some slight touches of a fever, which ended at last in a violent attack*; it was attributed to the disturbance caused by a prodigious quantity of humours, which were discharged by a purge; and as the fever seemed to have wholly ceased, the king thought himself cured, and wrote to me to that effect; observing however, that his indisposition had left a faintness and dejection upon him which was not usual with him, but that he would endeavour to disperse it by walking, if he could get strength

* In the following manner the historian Matthieu speaks of this disorder of Henry IV. "While he was very merry with his mistress and Bellegarde, and laughing heartily at some satirical verses, he was suddenly seized with a violent fit of vomiting, which

" kept him for seven hours together in very great danger, all that time having a constant desire to drink, and still throwing up the water while the glass was at his head." Tom. II. liv. ii. p. 277.

enough.

enough. These symptoms were the forerunner of a distemper, which a few days afterwards seized him with such violence that he was soon in great danger; and I had the affliction to find him in this condition on my arrival at Monceaux, with Chatillon and D'Incarville, whom he sent for in the letter I have just mentioned. I thought for a long time that I was only come to see my dear master expire in my arms, for he would not permit me to leave Monceaux during his illness, and often called me to his bed-side. In one of these moments when the obstinacy and continual recurrence of his distemper baffled all the art of the physicians, and this prince himself thought that his last hour was approaching; "My friend, said he to me, you who have often seen me meet dangers which it was easy for me to have avoided, know better than any other person how little I fear death; but I will not deny that I am grieved to die before I have raised this kingdom to that splendor I intended for it; or convinced my people, by discharging them of part of their taxes, and governing them mildly, that I love them as my own children."

At length Henry's good constitution prevailed, and his distemper was removed almost instantaneously*; so that the grief into which his danger had plunged us, was followed immediately by the joy of his recovery. He had afterwards a slight relapse, which had no bad consequence: he sent me word of this at Paris, whither I had returned as soon as I saw him out of danger. And in another letter, dated the 6th of November, which Schomberg, at his return from Monceaux, brought me to Paris from his majesty, he informed me that his health was perfectly established, except that he had some small re-

* It was during this malady that Henry IV. was very much troubled with a carneous excrescence; which served as a pretext to the dukes of Beaufort, to let him know, by means of La Riviere, his first phy-

sician, whom she gained over to her interest; that he could, after this, have no more children. Amelot de la Houssaye, num. I. sur la lettre 243 du cardinal d'Osat:

1598. mains of that dejection on his spirits of which he had formerly complained, and which he could not get rid of, notwithstanding he followed exactly the advice of his physicians. The sieurs Marefcot, Martin, and Rosset, having, upon the news of his illness, hastened to Monceaux to assist his physicians in ordinary with their advice, he had the attention to cause them to be paid for their trouble, writing to me to give each of them one hundred crowns, and fifty to Regnault his surgeon.

The king had not yet quitted Monceaux when the cardinal of Florence, who had so great a hand in the treaty of Vervins, passed through Paris, as he came back from Picardy, to return from thence to Rome, after he had taken leave of his majesty. The king sent me to Paris to receive him, commanding me to pay him all imaginable honours. He had need of a person near the pope so powerful as this cardinal, who afterwards obtained the pontificate himself: I therefore omitted nothing that could answer his majesty's intentions; and the legate having an inclination to see Saint-Germain-en-laye, I sent orders to Momier, the keeper of the castle, to hang the halls and chambers with the finest tapestry of the crown. Momier executed my orders with great punctuality, but with so little judgment, that for the legate's chamber he chose a suit of hangings wrought by the queen of Navarre; very rich, indeed, but which represented nothing but emblems and motto's against the pope and the roman court, as satirical as they were ingenious. The prelate endeavoured to prevail upon me to accept of a place in the coach that was to carry him to Saint-Germain; which I refused, being desirous of getting there before him, that I might see whether every thing was in order; with which I was very well pleased. I saw the blunder of the keeper, and reformed it immediately. The legate would not have failed to have looked upon such a mistake as a formed design to insult him, and to have represented it as such to the

the pope. Reflecting afterwards, that no difference in religion could authorize such sarcasms, I caused all those motto's to be effaced. 1598.

I had long hoped that a peace would afford me leisure to examine the finances of the kingdom thoroughly: all that I had hitherto been able to do, was only to alleviate the mischief; and far from having been able to dig to the root, so as to eradicate it at once, the different necessities of the state, which always followed each other so close during the war, made it be looked on as a great stroke of policy to manage the finances without increasing the confusion. It is certain that, upon a closer examination, they seemed tainted with an incurable disease, which could not even be enquired into without the most unshaken courage and invincible patience: the first glance was able to discover nothing but an universal loss of credit, the royal treasury indebted several hundred millions, no means of raising more money, excessive poverty, and ruin at hand; but this very state of despair made it necessary not to delay a single moment the undertaking this great work, while several opportunities concurring shewed at least a possibility of success. Every thing was in tranquillity; the pay of the troops considerably lessened, the greater part of the military expences suppressed, the king's council weary at length of making useless endeavours to deprive me of any management of public affairs, almost all business was transacted by me; these gentlemen disdained even to come to the assemblies, unless forced thither by their own interest, or that of their relations or friends: in those assemblies nothing was proposed without my approbation, and nothing executed without my consent; the king had no secret he reserved from me, nor any authority that he did not occasionally invest me with; all these considerations persuaded me that, if the calamities caused by so many long and cruel civil wars were ever to be repaired, now or never was the time to accomplish it,

1598.

I had received from nature a strong constitution, a body able to support * long labours, and a mind capable of great application, a natural propensity to

* The picture which M. de Perfixe gives us of M. de Rosny, altogether agrees with that which we have seen drawn here. "He had especially, says he, a genius turned for the management of the finances, and all the other qualifications requisite for such a station: in fact, he was a regular man, exact, and a great economist, he was punctual to his word, no ways prodigal, without any pompous ostentation, not inclined to profuse expence, game, or women, nor addicted to any thing that did not exactly tally with a man bred to such an employment; besides, he was vigilant, laborious, expeditious, bestowing almost his whole time on business and but little on his pleasures: withal he had the happy dexterity of seeing thro' such sort of matters, and of unraveling the puzzling perplexities, and untying the intricate knots, under which the farmers of the finances, when they have a mind to be knavish, endeavour to conceal their tricks." Part 3. P. Matthieu gives him no less high a character. Tom. II. liv. ii. p. 278. "The king gave him," says Le Grain, "the post of superintendent-general of his finances, investing him with so great an authority as had never been seen in that office before: in which, it must be confessed, there wanted a man at that time, who would have his eyes hood-winked to every other consideration but the king's advantage, that is, to the public treasure, which it was necessary to restore to its full vigour; and who would be more rigid than what either the dignity of some persons, or the respect due to others, would have endured at any other time; and indeed this great authority and power,

"which the king gave him, did, in a little time after, restore full strength to all the main resources of the state." See the whole of what this writer says, with regard to M. de Sully. liv. vii.

"He put," says D'Auhigné, tom. III. liv. v. chap. 3. "the finances into the hands of the marquis de Rosny, afterwards duke of Sully, because he found he had a very extensive and laborious genius, as also a natural sternness and severity of temper, which, without regarding the favour of any body, enabled him to bear the unpleasant irksomeness of rebuffs; and by that means, filled the king's coffers, to which the natural disposition of his master did not a little contribute."

In a small piece, tome. III. of the Mem. d'Etat de Villeroi, we find the following account. "This change in the face of affairs, which the said sieur de Sully had introduced into France, that had been brought to the lowest ebb of distress, rendering it opulent and flourishing by means of his good management and industry, does sufficiently testify his abilities. The remonstrances which he made even to the king's pleasure, and the opposition which he maintained against all the great men, shew his virtue, prudence and courage. Even those who envy him say, that he alone was of more use to the public, and knew its interests better, than all the rest of the kingdom besides." The manuscript which we quoted in the preface, coincides with this; and further may be added the suffrage of the greatest part of the historians and memoirs of that time, which all agree, that M. de Sully has, in a strict justice, deserved the appellation of the most laborious, the most capable, the

regularity

regularity and œconomy, improved by a particular study of that science during twenty-five years that I was near the king's person; and, if I may be allowed to say it, a passion yet more forcible for honour and virtue: such are the qualities I brought to the conduct of public affairs; with these, although one cannot keep clear of committing faults, and those likewise very considerable, yet (and experience as well as the success that attended my labours gives me a right to say so) one may be assured that the revenues of a state are fallen into good hands, when a moderate degree of judgment, much diligence and exactness, and still more probity, are qualities remarkable in him that governs them. I dare not assume more likeness than this to the portrait I am going to draw of a good minister of the finances, because that, although I have always proposed such an one for my imitation, yet I candidly confess I am far from pretending to set up myself for a model.

It would be the shortest way to say, that a man who is called to the management of public affairs, ought to have no passions; but that we may not wholly destroy the notion of such a being, by reducing him to an impossible and merely ideal existence, it is sufficient to say that he ought to have such a knowledge of them, as to be able to avoid their influence: he should be sensible of all the meanness of pride, the folly of ambition, the weakness of hatred, and the baseness of revenge. As I intend only to make such reflections as immediately relate to him, I shall not take any notice here of the great meanness of treating people ill, not only by actions but even words, and of never giving orders to inferiors but in the transports of rage, or peevishness of ill-

most upright, and especially the most steady minister that ever was. The severity, rigidity, and haughty carriage, which are almost the only faults with which he has been charged, arise from the last mentioned quality, that no doubt was

carried a little too far. We shall have occasion to speak more of it in the sequel: but I thought myself obliged previously to add these testimonies, to the account he gives us of his character and conduct.

1598. humour, seasoning them with oaths and curses, since, living for the public, he ought to appear affable, and be easy of access to every body, except to those who only come to him with a design to corrupt him, and never to lose sight of this maxim, which holds one of the first places in the affairs of government, That a kingdom ought to be regulated by general rules, and that exceptions only occasion discontent, and produce complaints.

A just knowledge of what is due to rank, and of different degrees of distinction, is so far from being contrary to this maxim, that it is essentially necessary to it, as well for observing those rules of behaviour to persons of different ranks, which the French politeness has established, as to cure himself of that error that his riches and the favour of his king place every other person in a state of subordination to him. An inclination for the fair sex is a source of weaknesses and injustice, which will inevitably carry him beyond the bounds of his duty; a passion for deep play, will expose him to temptations a thousand times more difficult to be overcome by a man who has all the money of the kingdom passing through his hands; that he may escape this dangerous snare, I am under a necessity of prescribing to him to have no acquaintance either with cards or dice.

A dislike of fatigue proceeds generally from the same inclinations which lead to voluptuousness, or create effeminacy. A statesman ought in temperance to seek for a remedy against a fondness for splendor, and the delicacies of the table, which serve only to enervate both body and mind. A virtuous man ought to be wholly unacquainted with drunkenness; a diligent man ought to be no less ignorant of what is called high living. As he ought to make his retirement in his cabinet at all times, and at all hours, not merely supportable, but pleasing; he cannot be too careful to prevent his mind from running on the delights of balls, masquerades, and other parties of pleasure; in all these trifling amusements

ments there is a nameless enchantment, that intoxicates the hearts of philosophers and misanthropes themselves. The same caution is necessary against hunting, keeping many servants, equipages, furniture, buildings, and all other occasions of expence that luxury has invented. A taste for any of these things soon degenerates into a kind of passion, of which the waste of time is not the only bad consequence; prodigality, ruin, and dishonour, are the usual effects of it: it belongs only to a man who cannot resolve to live and amuse himself with his own company, to think continually of galleries, columns, and gildings, and to run all his life after statues, antiques, and medals. Do you learn to be contented with a common picture; the delicacy of procuring, at a great expence of money and anxiety of mind, original and other scarce pieces, proceeds wholly from an affectation of taste. 1598.

I am, however, far from carrying the severity of these maxims so far, as to forbid a man, invested with a public employment, from having any attention to his own ease; and to deny him all kinds of amusement. I would have him indulge himself in moderate pleasures, and take care of his fortune, provided that he does the one without dissipation, and the other without dishonour. It is one of those advantages that attends a disposition not prone to expence, and fond of regularity, that he who is possessed of it, if he lives long, finds himself insensibly in affluent circumstances. To have made a fortune, a phrase that has so hateful a sound, because, when it is applied to a man of business, it commonly means nothing but injustice, oppression, and cruelty; and when applied to a courtier, nothing but mean tricks, despicable flattery, cringing servility, and even at some times knaveries and treachery, is nothing more than a natural consequence, and even an act of virtue, where all see that the fortune is only the reward of labour, or an honest recompence of good actions: that I may not be mistaken,
I will

1598. I will add, that this ought to appear so clearly as to force our greatest enemies to see it and confess it*.

It ought therefore to be an established rule, that every man who undertakes the management of the finances, or any other part of the ministry, should make, and renew from time to time, a kind of acknowledgment of the state of his income; that is, that upon his entrance into the ministry he should draw up an exact and particular memorial of his present possessions, and upon his leaving it give in another in the same form; so that whatever alterations have happened in his fortune may be known to others as well as himself. I have already taken care to give the public an account of every augmentation of my fortune, and each new dignity that was conferred upon me, according to the different periods of time when they happened, and I shall still continue this method: but as I look upon this affair to be subject to calculation, I am going to put every one into a way of doing it himself, and shall shew it completely done at the end of these Memoirs.

My father's estate being equally divided between me and the only remaining brother out of four that I had, my share of it, joined to my wife's fortune, which was ten thousand livres, amounted only to fifteen or sixteen thousand livres a year; and as it increased but very little during five and twenty years when the king had no means of rewarding his servants, this was my whole income when the revenues of the state were committed to my care. I am sensible that there are many persons who would blush to make such a confession; but for my part I have al-

* A great part of the maxims which fill up chap. 8. part 1. of the political testament of the cardinal de Richelieu, that treats both of the council and counsellors of the king, is evidently taken from this and many other places of M. de Sully's Memoirs; and chiefly what he says of the four qualities requi-

sited to constitute a perfect counsellor, to wit, capacity, fidelity, courage or resolution, and application. I shall have occasion in what follows to make some remarks upon that which seems overstrained in the maxims and manners of M. de Sully, with regard to what is called luxury.

ready said, that in this respect I see only one thing ^{1598.} that ought to give occasion for a blush, which is, the infamy of possessing riches either ill or doubtfully acquired: I have neither the reproach of extortion, confiscation, or unwarrantable profits to apprehend; all that I added to my first fortune arose merely from the king's bounty to me, so that I owe all to one God, and one master.

What I had been able to add to my fortune till the present year 1598, amounted to the following sums, an appointment of two thousand livres a year as counsellor of Navarre; as much, as counsellor of state, with a pension of three thousand six hundred livres, which the king annexed to this post: my salary as member of the council, having been augmented by degrees, and in proportion to the services the king found he received from me, was, at this time, brought to twenty thousand livres: the king doubled my company of gendarmes, which at first only consisted of fifty men, and after it was incorporated with that of the queen, of which I was made captain-lieutenant, the pay amounted to five thousand livres: the king made me likewise honorary * counsellor of the parliament of Paris, but without any income. It was at this time, that Chauvelin the younger had the first dispensation that had been granted from the rule of forty days, paying for it four thousand crowns. I shall make but one article of the government of Mante, which had been just then given me, and that of Gergeau which I had afterwards. Such was the state of my fortune at that time; the course of it, till then extremely slow, became very rapid the following years, by the great offices with which his majesty honoured me, and by rewards so considerable, that when I collect them together they will

* The letters patent by which Henry IV. made the marquis de Rosny an honorary counsellor, and thereby gave him a privilege of sitting in parliament, &c. dated March

16, 1602. may be seen in the registers of the parliament of Paris: as also the enrolment of these letters, and his admittance accordingly on the 19th of March the same year.

1598. make one of the most important articles. I shall take into it his least presents, and even those which I received from other royal persons. Before I enter into the discussion of affairs, and account of the finances which I have promised, since I have begun to inform the public of my personal character, I will finish the picture by giving a detail of my public employments, and my whole manner of living, after I was in a public employment: this is the proper place for it, although, in order to say all upon this head at one time, it is necessary I should suppose myself possessed of all those posts which were not given me till some time after.

Six days in the week a council was held both morning and evening; the first and most important was called the council of state and the finances, which singly took up the Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, by sitting both in the morning and afternoon; the king was the head of it, and was generally present. The dukes and peers, the officers of the crown, the knights of the king's orders, or those who had a warrant from his majesty, had a seat and a voice in the consultations: here were received and examined all kinds of petitions on any occasion whatever, but especially those relating to the pensions of state, which from this time began to be paid with a punctuality that made them be preferred to every other establishment, and even to landed estates. The three other days of the week were likewise taken up morning and evening with different councils, which were called *conseils des parties*, composed of a certain number of particular counsellors, where examinations were held of things properly referred to each of these councils: if there was any controversy, it was dispatched to the courts of justice to whose cognizance it belonged; and care was taken that justice should be done honestly and speedily. I was a member of each of these councils, and commonly presided in them when the king was not present, which often happened, especially in the *conseils des parties*.
I never

I never failed to be at the council of state, the whole business of which lay upon me: all the letters and petitions that were to be presented there were addressed to me; and as the questions that require general deliberations are not very common, it often happened, that in communicating the affair, I delivered likewise the resolutions to be taken; and often carried thither arrêts ready drawn up, that every thing might be dispatched at one sitting; and it happened but very seldom that alterations were made. I have always laid it down as a rule, that the answers which are given for regulating the conduct of persons employed in great affairs, cannot be too expeditious, or too distinct; all the time that is spent in contestations is lost time. 1598.

It may be easily imagined how much time these employments demanded: I accustomed myself to rise at four o'clock in the morning, both in winter and summer; and the two first hours were taken up in putting in as much order as possible those affairs that were to be each day brought upon the carpet: a minister who acts otherwise will leave all things in confusion and perpetual disorder, by the different perplexities he will find himself involved in at last. At half an hour after six I was dressed, and ready to attend the council, which began at seven, and generally ended at nine; and according to the importance of the business that was transacted in it, at ten, and sometimes eleven o'clock. It often happened that his majesty, instead of coming to the council, would send for me at nine or ten o'clock, when it was over, and either alone, or with his two other ministers of state*, Villeroi and Sillery, walk with

* Thus were those called then, who since have been intituled secretaries of state: and such as were named secretaries of state, as M. Forget, M. Lomenie, M. Beableu-Rusc, and M. Potier, were properly no more than four secretaries of the finances, or his majesty's first clerks. Tho' it appears that none of the three hath been called prime minister of state, yet so unequally was the distribution of the functions of the ministry made between M. de Sully and his two colleagues, and Henry IV. gave the first so great a share, and so much authority in

1598. us, acquaint us with his intentions, and give each of us orders relating to our particular employments: from thence I went home to dinner.

My table generally consisted of ten covers; and being served with a moderation that was not approved of by the lords of the court, especially the epicures, who make a serious affair of refining upon every thing that is eat or drank, I seldom invited any persons to dine with me; so that my table was usually filled only with my wife and children, or at most with some friend who was not more difficult to be pleased than myself. Frequent attempts were made to alter my conduct in this respect, but I always replied to any reproaches of that kind, in the words of an ancient, That if the guests were wise there was sufficient for them; if they were not, I could suffer the want of their company without trouble.

When dinner was over, I went into my great hall, where it was known that I regularly gave audience, and therefore at that hour always full: every one was admitted, and had free audience; the reply was no less speedy: herein my particular taste agreed perfectly with his majesty's intention. I began with the ecclesiastics of both religions: the country people, who remained last, were kept but a little time in expectation. I took care to dispatch every one's business before I retired; and even sent for those who, staying in the court or the garden, had suffered the hour to slip. If the affair that was proposed to me was equitable, and depended upon me, I promised in two words the execution of it; if otherwise, I civilly chid the proposer, and honestly forbore to

what belonged to their province, that we may say he was, in effect, prime minister, only that he had not the name: this title was not at that time much in use; for the chancellor Du Prat, under Francis I. the constable de Montmorency, under Henry II. &c. did not bear it, tho' they solely possessed the confi-

dence of their masters. M. de Villeroi was at the head of foreign affairs, having also the president Jeannin for his colleague. M. de Sillery and Bellievre, who became chancellor some little time after, had the management of all domestic affairs.

meddle

meddle with it: if it appeared doubtful, or complicated, I called an intendant, or one of my secretaries, to whom I gave the papers that led to an explanation of it. And such was my management, that the affair was totally dispatched within a week, if I had promised it; and let the business be ever so much perplexed, the council before whom it was laid always dispatched it within the month. 1598.

As to the other councils, which were held on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, I assisted at them likewise as long as I could, before the increase of my employments had likewise increased my business, and even afterwards; but when the direction of the marine, artillery, fortifications, buildings, bridges, and causeys, were entrusted to me only, to which must be added the affairs of my governments, I was obliged to apply to this business in the place of the other; and to devote the mornings of these three days to the dispatch of business relating to these offices, because his majesty thought them of consequence enough, especially that of surveyor-general of the high-ways, and superintendant of the fortifications and works, to be present at the clearing the accounts of each of these bodies of people, which was done in the presence of the governors and other officers, who were called together in a body on these occasions: notwithstanding this, I did not neglect the other councils, but took care to be present when any important affair was debated, especially when it related to war.

I regulated my time in such a manner, that I had still leisure enough for those other affairs, and also for many more which I have not yet mentioned. The extraordinary and unforeseen business I was engaged in, the conversations I had with his majesty, the orders and letters I received from him, may be imagined by a general declaration, that this prince not only informed me of whatever happened to him, but also entrusted me with his most private affairs,

1598.

fairs*, his secrets, designs, reflexions, private distempers, pleasures, domestic uneasinesses, fears, hopes, amours, friendships, and disgusts; in a word, all was confided to my fidelity and discretion, terms which I am justly entitled to make use of. In all these moments, to comply with the king's desires and occasions, there was an absolute necessity to lay aside the most pressing business, to invent schemes, to go upon private errands, answer letters, and undertake journies; by all which, the affairs of the state would have been injured, if by giving the night as well as the day to these accidental employments, which were not regulated by months, days, or hours, an extreme diligence in resuming those affairs that had been interrupted by them, had not restored every thing to its proper state.

One is surprized, in giving this detail, how, with such an exact economy of time, there should remain so little for affairs merely domestic: the few moments I could spare for them, I was never able to find but in one of the afternoons of those same three days; and these I snatched by intervals. It was necessary therefore that my wife should accustom herself to do all that I was not absolutely obliged to do; otherwise I must have relied upon people of business, or upon my domestics.

As to amusements, and hours of ease and refreshment, which were necessary to soften the fatigue of such extreme application to business, they were regulated with as much exactness as my most serious affairs; but, like them, subject to frequent interruptions: when, by good fortune, this did not happen, I had no occasion to go out of the arsenal to find them; for it was in this castle that I resided from the time I was made grand master till the

* "Never any minister had the confidence of his master more entirely than this had: and never was any more worthy of it, on account of his fidelity, ac-

tivity, continual application to business, and disinterestedness in every thing that related to the king's service, &c. Hist. de France de Châlons, tom. III. p. 255. death

death of my king, which gave me up to the tranquillity of a private life. The exercises of the arsenal, which was an excellent school for young people, gave the greatest relief to my mind, especially when I saw my children, my son-in-law, my relations and friends, mingled together: the good company which appeared in the afternoon at that little rendezvous, the exultations which were often heard, the air of gaiety without effeminacy, and of pleasure without negligence, which appeared there, is, of all things which I know, most proper to relieve a mind to which, by long habit of labour, all the amusements of mere idleness have been made insipid. In whatever manner I spent the afternoon, when the hour of supper arrived, I ordered all my doors to be shut, and no person to be suffered to enter, unless he came from the king. From this hour, till I returned to bed, which I always did at ten o'clock, there was no longer any mention of business, all was ease, mirth, and social joy, with a small number of good and agreeable friends.

The office of prime minister, though at all times laborious, is not always loaded with the same difficulties; and the good fortune of those is to be envied, who are called to it at a conjuncture when the whole stream of affairs having for many years run on in a calm and regular course, they have nothing to do but sit quietly at the helm, content themselves with a general inspection, and leave the rest to be performed by that great number of persons who act under their order. This advantage I never enjoyed, as may be perceived by what I have had occasion to say of it at different times; and, not to touch yet upon the affairs of the finances, which was at that time an ocean without bottom or shore, I desire the reader just to cast a look upon the different perplexities which must be met with, without examining foreign affairs; a cabal of disaffected people to watch narrowly, and, if possible,

1598. to break; a religious dispute to terminate, a powerful party to satisfy, and a general subordination and scheme of government to establish and cause to be observed. Things were in such a state, that of all those officers of war and *police*, of the finances, judicature, and the king's household, of pensioners, and those that received salaries from the state, nothing more was known than that their number was infinite, and that there was a necessity for learning their names, and marking them all in a register, in order to suppress part of them.

The affairs of war were in the utmost disorder, the regulation of which did not, as may possibly be thought, depend upon the disbanding part of the troops; there was a necessity for taking cognisance of all the towns and fortresses, most of which were so near destruction, that upon this account, as well as to lessen the number of garrisons that were supported in France, those that were useless were to be demolished; which could not however be done till after the death of those persons from whom it would have been dangerous to take away the governments of them.

The marine alone might have furnished business enough for one minister for a great number of years; for this part of the state, which requires so much application, does not make a very rapid progress; it can be derived only from that quiet and splendor which a kingdom gains by peace and a good government*. It is not to be imagined to what a degree the marine, and the commerce that depended on it, had been neglected in France. I agreed with the king, that this establishment should be begun at the foundation; that the sea-coasts should be visited, and ports examined, in order to take measures for

* "A nation must be very powerful, says cardinal Richelieu, after M. de Sully, to pretend to this inheritance, (the possession of the sovereignty at sea) the titles to it being found-

ed more in force than in reason." Testament politique de ce cardinal, part. II. chap. ix. § 5, 6. Cardinal D'Ossat, in several of his letters, advises Henry IV. to put his marine on a new footing.

repairing them. That the same ought to be done with those few disabled vessels and galleys that were yet to be found, till new ones could be built; after which, officers should be appointed, and sailors and pilots sought for, who might be stimulated to industry by rewards: in a word, to spare a longer detail, that an absolutely new marine should be created. 1598: }

All this could not be performed but by degrees, and a little at a time. The finances being that part of the body of the state which was most diseased, required assistance first: the greatness of the evil may be imagined, by an inventory of the sums which were drawn from the exchequer to bring over the heads and other principal members and cities of the league to the king's party. This inventory has something curious enough; it amounted to more than thirty-two millions of livres, and is as follows*.

To the duke of Lorraine and other persons comprehended in his treaty, three million seven hundred sixty-six thousand eight hundred and twenty-five livres: To the duke of Maienne and others comprehended in his treaty, together with two regiments of Swifs, whom the king took upon himself to pay, three million five hundred and eighty thousand livres: To the duke of Guise and others comprehended in his treaty, three hundred and eighty-eight thousand livres: To the duke of Nemours and others, three hundred and seventy-eight thousand livres: To the duke of Mercœur, for Blavet and other towns of Brittany, four million two hundred ninety-five thousand three hundred and fifty livres: To the duke D'Elbœuf, for Poitiers, &c. nine hundred and seventy thousand eight hundred and twenty-four livres: To messieurs de Villars and the chevalier D'Oise, for Rouen and Havre, compre-

* Here the old Memoirs have an error, in the calculation, of about one hundred thousand livres.

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hending likewise the indemnification granted to the duke of Montpensier, maréchal Biron, the chancellor, &c. three million four hundred seventy seven thousand eight hundred livres: To the duke d'Epéron and others, four hundred and ninety-six thousand livres: For the reduction of Marseilles, four hundred six thousand livres: To the duke of Brissac, for Paris, &c. one million six hundred ninety-five thousand four hundred livres: To the duke of Joyeuse, for Toulouse, &c. one million four hundred and seventy thousand livres: To monsieur de La Chatre, for Orleans, Bourges, &c. eight hundred ninety-eight thousand nine-hundred livres: To messieurs de Villeroi and d'Alincourt, for Pontoise, &c. four hundred seventy-six thousand five hundred and ninety-four livres: To monsieur de Bois Dauphin and others, six hundred and seventy-eight thousand eight hundred livres: To monsieur de Balagny, for Cambray, &c. eight hundred and twenty-eight thousand nine hundred and thirty livres: To messieurs de Vitry and de Medavy, three hundred and eighty thousand livres: To the sieurs Vidame d'Amiens, d'Etournelle, marquis de Trenel, Sesseval, du Pêche, Lamet, &c. and for the cities of Amiens, Abbeville, Peronne, Coucy, Pierrefont, &c. one million two hundred sixty-one thousand eight hundred and eighty livres: To the sieurs de Bellan, Quionville, Joffreville, Du-Pêche, &c. and for Troyes, Nogent, Vitré, Chaumont, Rocray, Chateau-Porcien, &c. eight hundred thirty thousand and forty-eight livres: To messieurs de Rochefort, and for Vezelay, Macon, Mailley, &c. four hundred fifty-seven thousand livres: To messieurs de Canillac, d'Achion, Lignerac, Monfan, Fumel, &c. and for the city Du Puy, &c. five hundred forty-seven thousand livres: To messieurs de Monpezat and de Montespan, &c. and for several cities of Guienne, three hundred and ninety thousand livres: For Lion, Vienne, Valence, and other cities of Dauphiny, six hundred and thirty-six thousand

land eight hundred livres: To the sieurs Daradon, La-Pardieu, Bourcanny, Saint-Offange, for Dinan, &c. one hundred and eighty thousand livres: To the sieurs de Leviston, Baudoin, and Beauvillers, one hundred and sixty thousand livres. 1598.

I should terrify my readers were I to shew them that this sum made up but a small part of that which was demanded from the exchequer, both for the French and foreigners, under the title of pay, pensions, loans, arrears, &c. and that the total of all these sums, after making some deductions, amounted, by the computation I made, to near three hundred and thirty millions of livres: this calculation I would lay down here, but that I think it will appear more properly when I shall treat of the discussion of all these particulars.

Here was a large field displayed for the labours of a superintendant of the finances; but the difficulty was, where to begin; the exorbitancy of the state debts demanded an increase of the taxes; but the general poverty a diminution of the old: and every thing being well considered, I even found it for the interest of the prince, that the cries of the public misery should be heard. It is not possible to give a just idea of the dreadful condition to which the provinces were reduced, especially those of Dauphiny, Provence, Languedoc, and Guienne; the theatres of long and bloody wars and outrages, by which they were wholly exhausted. I granted, over the whole kingdom, a remission of the remainder of the subsidies of 1596, which were yet to pay*; a proceeding that necessity, as well as charity and justice, demanded. This gratuity, which gave the people time to breathe again, was the loss of twenty millions to the king; but it facilitated the pay-

* Together with the arrears of preceding years, for which private persons had given their bonds to the receivers of the taxes; some of which bonds, according to Le Grain, liv. vii. being seven years backwards, were declared null and void.

1598. ment of the subsidies of 1597, which had been otherwise morally impossible.

After this relief I endeavoured to procure the country people as many more favours as I was able, being strongly persuaded, that, it could not be the sum of thirty millions, which was raised every year in a kingdom so rich and of such extent as France, that could reduce it to the condition I now saw it in; and that the sums made up of extortions and false expences, must certainly infinitely exceed those which were brought into his majesty's coffers. I took the pen, and resolved to make this immense calculation. I saw, with a horror which gave new force to my zeal, that for these thirty millions that were given to his majesty, there were drawn from the purses of the subjects, I almost blush to say it, one hundred and fifty millions*: the thing appeared to me so incredible that I could not believe it, till with great industry I convinced myself it was true. After this, I was no longer ignorant from whence the calamity of the people proceeded, at a time when, although commerce was interrupted, industry stopped or persecuted, the farms neglected and without value, and every other kind of wealth diminished in proportion, they had been obliged to furnish a sum so much beyond their abilities, which had been forced from them with the utmost violence.

* This sum, exorbitant as it is, will not, however, appear exaggerated, if we consider, that besides the ordinary expences of levying it, which were at that time excessive, the people had still a great number of other impositions and exactions to bear. "For France would become too rich, says cardinal Richlieu, Test. pol. part II. chap. 9. §. 7. and the people be in too flourishing a condition, if the public money, which other states expend with economy, were not squandered

"with prodigality here. She loses more, in my opinion, than those kingdoms that pretend to rival her lay out in their ordinary disbursements." Upon this he relates a good saying of a Venetian ambassador; to wit, that to render France happy, he wished no other, than that she knew as well how to expend the money she squandered without reason, as his republic did not to spend one single farthing without occasion and the greatest good husbandry.

I then

I then applied my cares to the authors of this ^{1598.} oppression, who were the governors and other officers of the army, as well as the civil magistrates and officers of the revenue; who all, even to the meanest, abused, in an enormous manner, the authority their employments gave them over the people: and I caused an arret of council to be drawn up, by which they were forbid, under great penalties, to exact any thing from the people, upon what title soever, without a warrant in form, beyond what they were obliged to on account of their share of the tallies and other subsidies settled by the king; the treasurers of France being enjoined to give information of all contrary practices, on pain of being answerable for them themselves.

This arret was a check to the greediness of all these petty extortioners, but raised a furious resentment in them against me; and notwithstanding there was something shameful in expressing it, yet many of them made loud complaints of me, as if I had in reality stripped them of their lawful possessions. The duke d'Épernon was the first who explained himself on this head, and ventured to come to a quarrel with me about it: the mortification he had suffered had not lessened the fierceness and insolence of his temper. The Provençals had often blessed the moment when he quitted their province: no people could be more miserable than his vassals, and those that were too near neighbours to his lands; he raised every year at their expence, a revenue of above sixty thousand crowns.

The members of the council, to whom this arret gave as much pain as to the duke d'Épernon, informed him of the day when it was to be passed; and he flattered himself he should be able to prevent it. Accordingly he came and took his seat in the council; and addressing himself to me, made

* The quarrel which is here spoken of happened on Monday the 26th of October, 1598, at the chan-

cellor's, where the council was held. "The duke d'Épernon having told M. de Rosny that he

a com-

1598. a comparison, with great arrogance and contempt, of the manner in which he supported the honour of his name, with that in which I disgraced mine, by the new trade I had taken up. To this imperti-

"was not obliged to wait upon him at his house, valuing his quality at a very high rate; the latter made answer, with an air of rodomontade, That he was descended from one of the oldest families in France. Yes, Sir, replied the duke d'Epernon, if you will allow that there is some difference betwixt you and me. Having mentioned his sword, and taken occasion to raise the profession of arms above all others, M. de Rosny returned, That he likewise had a sword, and knew how to use it. To which the duke d'Epernon replied, That he did not doubt that. The chancellor then interposing pacified them: whereupon they began to talk a little more coolly; when M. de Rosny, resuming the discourse, said to him, Sir, you have treated me as if I were some petty tax-gatherer. No, replied the duke d'Epernon, you will find, that I am not come hither to give you any opprobrious language. I am not a person to be used so, says M. de Rosny, interrupting him: such treatment I would not bear from any man alive. I did not intend any affront, says the duke d'Epernon. I am glad, returns M. de Rosny, affecting to take his antagonist's last words as an apology, that you did not affront me. I give nobody any affront, replied the duke d'Epernon; and were even that the case, I carry about me what will give satisfaction to persons of my own rank, and to others according to their stations. It was, probably, after these last words, which were very provoking, that both of them clapt their hands to the

hilt of their swords. The chancellor and the other counsellors had often interposed, and "at length parted them," The 8055th volume of MSS. de la Bibliot. du Roi, from which I take these particulars almost word for word, relates them, with some other similar circumstances, to show the hasty and proud temper of the duke de Sully: and at the same time the whole of this account is given us in such a manner as is not at all favourable to him. Le Grain has also this fact in his eye in what I am going to quote. But tho' he agrees, that a minister ought, above all things, to have a great regard for moderation, yet he cannot forbear justifying M. de Sully: "How was it possible, says he, that he should retrench so many pensions and salaries of officers who did no service for them, refuse so great a number of persons that pressingly claimed and demanded rewards, and have a watchful eye over the many counsels that were given the grantees of the kingdom, which counsels he often turned to the king's advantage, and to their great dissatisfaction, without being invested with a very extensive authority, and shewing at the same time a lofty supercilious carriage? The king too would have it so, to the end that all might be on an equal footing, till he had discharged his duty towards his kingdom and enriched it: for which reason subjects ought not to murmur. And in as much as the king testified his approbation of all M. de Sully's actions, when his majesty declared to some of the great ones that wanted to quarrel with him, that he himself

nence I replied without any equivocation, by declaring to him, that every way I thought myself at least his equal. This plainness threw d'Epernon into a rage, instead of that insulting calmness he had affected at first; and he proceeded to menaces, which I heard with no more patience than the rest. I answered him with great spirit: he replied in the same manner: and, without further explanation, each of us laid his hand on his sword. If the persons who were present had not thrown themselves between us, and forced us to go out of the council at opposite doors, a very uncommon scene would have been acted in the place where this debate happened. Our quarrel being related to the king, who was then at Fontainebleau, his majesty was so well pleased with the zeal which on this occasion I shewed for justice, that he wrote to me that same hour with his own hand, and praising my conduct, offered to be my second against d'Epernon, to whom he said he would speak in such a manner, as to prevent him for the future from giving me any more insults of that kind. D'Epernon perceiving the king was greatly offended with him for this proceeding, asked my pardon in the presence of his majesty, who obliged us to embrace each other.

Besides those revenues which the princes of the blood, with the king's sister at their head, and the officers of the crown had contrived for themselves, the people were farther incommoded by the manner of their collecting the revenues. There was not one of these persons who was not a pensioner of the king, under the title of their employments, rewards,

"would be his second; we are not at liberty to canvass such proceedings, nor injure his majesty's memory after his death, nor the duke de Sully's honour during his life, seeing he acted nothing but for the service of his master.—God grant," adds this writer, after shewing the wisdom and necessity of the king's

conduct, and that of his minister, "that this treasure may be preserved with the same care that it has been acquired," liv. vii. I thought this remark necessary to be made, as in the sequel of these Memoirs I shall adduce a great many other examples, like the dispute we have just now seen mentioned.

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gratuities, or treaties made with his majesty on their returning to their obedience to him; and, by an effect of the licentiousness of the past times, it was customary for these officers, instead of addressing themselves to the treasurer of the exchequer for the payment of their pensions, to pay themselves out of the produce of the farms upon which they had assignments; some upon the tailles, some on the excise, others upon foreign commodities, the crown lands, five large farms, escheats, tolls of rivers, *comptables de Bourdeaux* patents of Languedoc, Provence, &c. The king had no other means of paying more considerable debts which he had contracted with foreign princes, namely, the king of England, the count Palatine, the duke of Wirtemberg, the duke of Florence, the Swiss Cantons, the republic of Venice, and the city of Strasbourg. His majesty paid in the same manner those pensions that policy required he should allow foreign princes and communities; for France has always made herself a voluntary debtor to all Europe: from whence it happened, that all these different creditors set up new farms for their profit, in the midst of the king's; they had their commissaries and accountants among those of his majesty's, and who applied themselves with equal industry to pillage the people. Certainly there never was a more dangerous, and at the same time a more shameful abuse, that every one, and particularly foreigners, should be thus suffered to concern themselves with the revenues of the state; and monopolisers of all nations multiply usuries and extortions in the most audacious manner*, and with impunity arrogate to themselves part of the royal authority.

* This abuse must have drawn after it some consequences of so ruinous a nature, that we cannot too much bless the memory of him who had the courage to charge himself with the public odium, entirely to extirpate it; instead of accusing him of a haughty behaviour and stern temper, without which it would have been impossible for him to have accomplished it.

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Nothing seemed to me more necessary than to strike suddenly at the root of this evil, by a second declaration; in which all the foreigners, and natives, princes of the blood, and other officers, were forbidden, on pretence of any claim, title, or debt whatever, to levy money upon the farms, and other revenues of the state; and were enjoined to apply to the exchequer only for the payment of their pensions, arrears, &c. I saw, unmoved, the storm which such a declaration could not fail of raising against me: in effect, the arret was no sooner published, than every place resounded with the clamours of the lords, and chief gatherers of taxes; from whose complaints and exclamations, it should seem that they had been reduced to beggary, when they were only brought back to the conditions of their original agreement, and had their payments transferred to different funds. The king, who had great sensibility in his temper, was moved at these complaints, and could not suppose them to be so unreasonable as they were; he was apprehensive that my zeal had probably carried me to commit some imprudence; he therefore sent for me, and as soon as I approached, "Ah! friend, said he to me, what have you done?"

It was not difficult for me to convince his majesty, that I had acted upon principles of justice and regularity; that it was not fit his finances should have any longer so many masters, nor so many different mortgages; that the farms would produce him an income twice as great, as soon as their value should be raised by being in his hands, and that this profit had not before accrued to the different proprietors, but to their agents and clerks; and lastly, that whenever this was done, it was not depriving them of what was their own, but taking away profits which they had no right to. The king comprehended the justness of this proceeding, but he was perplexed about the discontent he must necessarily give to Sir Thomas Edmonds, agent to the queen

1598. queen of England; a certain German, factor to the duke of Wirtemberg; Gondy, farmer to the duke of Florence; and lastly, the constable, his godfather, the most distinguished persons in his court, and his own sister.

I intreated his majesty to send for some of them, to whom I might speak in his presence. The constable was but just gone out of his apartment: he was called back: "Well, godfather, said the king to him, what complaint have you against Rosny?"—"I complain, says he, that he has put me upon the level with the common people, by taking from me a poor little assignment which I had in Languedoc upon a tax, of which nothing ever came to you." I answered the constable with great civility, that I should be the first to acknowledge myself guilty, if it had been my design that he should lose any thing. I asked him what profit he made of this impost, knowing well that he was one of those persons from whom the contractors exacted the highest price for their services. Monsieur de Montmorency answered my question; and I assured him, that he might depend on being paid the whole sum. "'Tis well, said he; but who will promise me that I shall be paid exactly as I now am?" "I will, replied I, and will give you his majesty for security, who shall never turn bankrupt, I promise you, at least if he suffers me to manage his revenues as I propose to do; and I will be counter-security to him, because I expect, that if I make him rich, he will be so kind to me that I shall never break."

The constable, who was a plain honest man, was pleased with my answer, and sincerely approved my sentiments; he even confessed to me, that he had let out the impost in question for only nine thousand crowns a year, out of which he was obliged to give two thousand to the treasurer. "All this I know, replied I, and I am resolved to give you the nine thousand crowns entire; yet the king shall

“ shall have eighteen thousand, and there will still
“ remain four thousand for me.” The constable 1598.
was amazed; he was not willing to own he had
been so greatly imposed upon; while the king in the
mean time laughed heartily. However, the next
day I brought a person to his majesty, who in his
presence took this farm at fifty thousand crowns,
in the name of the states of Languedoc. The king
offered to assign me, upon this sum, the four thou-
sand crowns, which I had only proposed in jest. I
refused it, and told his majesty, that the disorder in
the finances, which I was endeavouring to remedy,
having mostly proceeded from the easy temper of
the deceased king, in appropriating his farms to
the gratuities he bestowed on those about him, as
well financiers as others, they would infallibly fall
again into the same inconveniency, if it was not
made a custom for men of business, who served his
majesty usefully, to receive their rewards only from
his hands. The king agreed that I was in the right,
and I lost nothing by it, for having procured twelve
thousand crowns to be advanced upon this farm,
he sent Beringhen with a present of four thousand to
me.

I satisfied all those persons who were in the same
situation as the constable; and, indeed, what could
be more reasonable, than that his majesty should
himself receive his own revenues? As for all the
rest, whose interest made them deaf to arguments
so convincing, I gave myself no more trouble about
them. By this article, the revenues of the crown
had an addition of sixty thousand crowns.

This trouble was slight, compared with that which
I found in laying open the tricks of the traders:
the most likely means I could think of to accom-
plish it, was to procure such a general and exact ac-
count of the finances as I have mentioned: but
here lay the difficulty: I was not satisfied with that
which I drew up, as has been observed, in the year
1596, for 1597; nor even for the year following,
altho

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altho' it was much more exact than the others, because I was under a necessity of regulating my calculations according to the reports, and by the accounts of the intendants and treasurers; from all whom, without exception, notwithstanding the caution I used in chusing them for this purpose, I had reason to expect artifice and fraud. I therefore went to work again this year: I collected all the commissions of tailles sent to the several districts, and all the edicts by which money was raised throughout the kingdom; to these I joined the tariffs made in consequence of these edicts, and the leases and under leases granted by the council to the first and second farmers: I compared all these pieces according to the knowledge which my former work had afforded me in this matter; and at last I thought that I had come for once to the bottom of the business: there was some abuses in the ordinary commissions of the tailles; these, however, were the least; there were much greater in the extraordinary commissions granted before-hand for the ensuing year; but the chief enormities appeared to arise from the under-leases: the farmers that took them from the council, and the treasurers of France, whom the farmers employed, fingered twice as much as had been assigned them; and as these farmer-generals granted under-leases of under-leases, the series of under-leases proceeding without end, produced a multiplication of charges, endless likewise, and afforded no other advantage than that of maintaining in profusion those who did nothing to deserve it; first, the gentlemen of the council, then the farmers, and the rest of the subordination, who kept the trade a profound secret into which they had been once initiated.

I was transported at this discovery; and by the authority of the king, to whom I had told it, I stopt the produce of the tailles paid upon extraordinary commissions, and, without having any regard to them, sent word to the receivers, that they should

should account for it as for any other money, and should immediately remit it. I annulled for ever the under-leases; and ordered, that for the future every part of the revenue should have only one farmer and one receiver. Great were the clamours on this occasion; but the most discreet amongst the farmers, knowing that these murmurs only served to make them be taken notice of, and finding that by the suppression of a great part of the contractors, places were likely to become scarce, came in haste to look for me, and took the same farms again upon their own account; with this difference, that their profit came to the king, the value of the farms being doubled*.

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In proportion as my work was improved by my experience, I brought my general state of the revenues towards perfection; it then came into my mind to go on no longer by the forms of accounts, such as the receivers had drawn up themselves, but to send them some contrived by myself; in which I endeavoured to have every thing clear, and drawn up to the minutest particular. When they were returned to my hands I examined them over again with the utmost accuracy, noting the slightest inadvertence or omission; so that there was soon nothing at all left out, even in the least and most obscure parts of the revenue, because every thing was to be justified by the writings which I ordered to be brought along with it, and which I compared with the utmost attention. Thus I blew up all the mines

* Though we are more and more convinced of the justice of this, to wit, that the king should take for his own advantage all possible share in the profits of his farms and other revenues; yet we find, it seems, and that with some ground of reason, that since the duke of Sully's time, there has not been made, in this respect, all that progress which his views, and the great care he took, had apparently given

hopes to expect. We shall have occasion to enter into this matter at some greater length, when our author comes to speak of the farming of the *tailles*, and other imposts, which is the true cause of all the difficulties that are to be met with in attaining to the end he proposed, and which all the ministers after him have endeavoured to reach at.

of

1598. of the receivers, which were very numerous, such as, pretended differences, bad money, drawbacks, immunities, privileges of office, payments of rent, charge of carriage, fees to judges, and costs of auditing accounts; all these, and more, were very commodiously used to the advantage of the commissioners, because no-body had given himself the pain, to rate, according to their real value, all those particulars which, being thus swelled beyond their bulk, swallowed up a great part of the sum received; and the people of the council, who ought to have examined them, knew the advantage of this jargon. So little care was taken of the accounts of the receivers, that a man often quitted his employment, charged with vast sums of arrears, which afterwards sunk into oblivion. I put an end to this custom: I obliged those who came into office to enquire after the men that had gone before them, and used the only method that could have any effect upon them. As long as any arrears remained, they had no other fund for their salaries and allowance. They then knew very well how to hinder these little bankruptcies, instead of favouring them, as they had hitherto done.

Several paymasters, and particularly those of the chamber of accounts, upon whom assignments are most frequently granted, had the ingenuity to contrive ways of tiring out those who brought the assignments, by frequent delays, till they were content to take part of the money granted them, and to give an acquittance for the whole. I ordered that no payment should be kept back; and that no money should be taken for prompt payment. This prohibition put an end to all the accounts of the repayment of money payable by the precepts of the chamber, and to the multiplicity both of accounts and charges, by which the king's money was stolen to an incredible degree. From this time we had a clear insight into the finances, and confusion was at an end.

When

When the general state, of which I have been speaking, with the regulations and different models were drawn up, I went to read them before the council, in the king's absence. I easily perceived that my colleagues were offended at my diligence, and at my neglecting to desire their assistance in my work. However, they contented themselves with answering me drily, and in a jesting manner, that my secretaries had an easy time of it with me: these papers were indeed all written with my own hand*. But as soon as I had left them, they acknowledged that my labour had been infinitely great and exact; and that it would be in vain for the future to pretend to hide any thing from me. Two days after, when his majesty was present in the council, I read these papers again; upon which he asked them their opinions of my accounts. They allowed them to be very right, and said, that for a soldier I was extremely expert in business. I know not whether it was they who were the authors of a piece of slander that was current about that time, namely, that I had employed † Du-Luat to write a book, in which, under pretence of giving a new view of the finances, I railed, without charity or reserve, at his majesty's best servants. The king assured me, that all the endeavours of my enemies should never alter his friendship for me. In effect, his majesty, from

* The present duke of Sully preserves, as a choice curiosity, a great part of these manuscripts, with many other originals of M. de Rosny's, which he takes pleasure to shew to such as visit him: he looks upon them as one of the principal ornaments of the museum which his taste for the sciences induces him to augment daily: and these are, in fact, so many glorious monuments of his illustrious family.

† Ange Capel, the sieur Du-Luat. There is mention made in vol. 8778 des Manuscrits de la Bi-

bliot. du Roi, of a book in which he gives many useful hints to the members of the council with regard to the finances: this, no doubt, is the book which our author means here. Du-Luat is represented to us in the remarks on chap. ix. de la Confession de Sancy, as a quick, ready, and agreeable flatterer, who in a manner bewitched the duke de Sully, his master, with a genealogy, in which he derived his pedigree from the house of Courtenay. Journal du regne de Henry III. printed in 1720, tom. II. p. 477.

1598. that moment, behaved to me in such a manner, as to make me look upon him rather as a friend than a master; he interested himself in all my concerns, shared in all my joys, and bore a part of every affliction.

I should be doubly ungrateful if I concealed the obligations I received from this prince: with regard to the finances, they were not confined to the supporting all my proceedings with the utmost resolution (as it happened when the mayor and aldermen of Paris refused to communicate their accounts to me, under pretence that they had no connexion with the council of the finances) nor in preventing all my desires, or with the gentlest goodness consoling me under difficulties, as he generally did, by proposing himself for an example: his knowledge and his advice, especially in relation to the finances, had often been of great use to me; and I candidly confess, that without it I should have in vain attempted an enterprise so difficult as a reformation in them: most part of my designs were hinted by him*; and I keep, with the greatest care, whole memorials written, altho' very long, with his own hand, upon subjects which equally employed us both.

After this I ought to own, with the same sincerity, that most of those praises which were given to the administration of affairs in the reign of Henry IV. ought with justice to revert to him. Others would have served him with equal abilities and as much fidelity as me; for it never happens that good subjects abandon their king; it is the king who abandons good subjects. The great difficulty will ever be, to meet with a prince, who in a minister capable of managing his affairs, seeks not for one who will comply with all his inclinations, and soothe all his passions; who uniting great wisdom to great penetration, calls none to those employments but

* M. de Perfixe, p. 225. likewise assures us, that Henry IV. had thoroughly studied the subject of the finances.

persons whom he knows to have as much rectitude as capacity; in a word, who being possessed of great abilities himself, has not the weakness to envy that advantage in another. This jealousy of merit in a sovereign, which supposes, however, that he is himself master of some degree of it, creates in one sense more disorders in a state, than the hatred he is known to have of particular vices can do good. 1598.

When I quitted Brittany I left there regulations for the finances, differing according to the nature and privileges of that province; and afterwards sent thither the sieur de Maupeou, master of accounts, as well to enforce the observation of them, and raise the value of the farms in that province, as to hasten the payment of the money for which I had settled a fund. I likewise sent, for the same purpose, Coefnard, auditor of accounts, to Poictou, and Bizouz to Champagne. I appointed Champigny over the toll of the rivers in the district of Orleans and Touraine. But for this time I have said enough of the finances.

I will now proceed to incidents of another kind, which by their singularity rendered this year remarkable. It is yet a question, of what nature that illusion might be which was seen so often, and by so many persons, in the forest of Fontainebleau: it was a spectre*, surrounded with a pack of hounds, whose cries were heard, and who were seen at a distance, but vanished when any one approached near to it.

* Perefice mentions this apparition, and makes it speak, with a hoarse and frightful voice, these words, *M'attendez-vous*, or *M'en-tendez-vous*, or *Amendez-vous*. He ascribes these visions to the delusive arts of forcerers or evil spirits, *ibid.* part iii. See likewise Journal Henry IV. and *La chronologie septennaire*, ann. 1599, where it is said, that the king and his court, who laughed at this apparition as a fable, saw it one day distinctly among the bushes, in the shape of a

tall black man; which so frightened them, that the best was he that could shew the lightest pair of heels. P. Matthieu assures us, tom. II. p. 268, that one day, at Fontainebleau, the duke of Sully, having heard the noise of it, came down, imagining it was the stamping of the king's horses, after his return from hunting. Bongars, *epist.* 184. ad Camerar, tells us, with an air of gravity, that this was the ghost of an huntsman that had been killed in the forest in the time of Francis I.

1598. A whale was taken on the coast of Holland, eighty feet in length*. The Tiber overflowed in such a manner as to throw down a great number of houses, and laid part of the city of Rome under water. A report was spread in Europe, that the Jews, through hatred of the Christians, had offered the grand signior five hundred thousand ducats to destroy the holy sepulchre at Jerusalem.

But the most interesting event, and with which this year was closed, was the death of Philip II. king of Spain, after suffering, for the space of eight or nine months, such agonizing † torments, as a principle of piety only could have enabled him to support with that patience he shewed for so long a time: however, this heroism of his was quite lost upon the vulgar. When they reflected, that through his avarice and ambition he had almost drowned the new world with the blood of its miserable inhabitants, and on his own subjects exercised equal cruelties, except taking away their lives, they looked upon those infectious ulcers with which his whole body was covered, to be not so much a natural accident, as the effect of divine vengeance. He left a will behind him, which, in my opinion, is too curious a piece to be passed over in silence; it is not certainly known whether he dictated it in his illness,

* See the description of this monstrous fish in the *Chronologie Septennaire*, p. 17. and the account of this overflowing of the Tiber, in cardinal d'Ossat's letters, p. 365.

“ It was greater, says he, than any recorded in history; so that the whole plain on which stands the city of Rome was under water a pike's height in the streets and houses; and that not one among a hundred could go to hear mass on Christmas-day. This inundation did inestimable damage,” &c.

† “ For two and twenty days together there was, says Perefex, a flux of blood from all the vessels of his body; and a little

“ before his death impostumes that broke in his breast, from which there continually issued so great a swarm of vermin, that all the care of his attendants could not destroy them.” Ibid. M. De Thou, liv. cxx. adds to this a dysentery, tenesmus, dropfy, &c. and he gives as moving a description of the deplorable condition of this prince, as of his patience and religious sentiments under it. Mathieu says, that he had no less than seven fistulas on two fingers of his right hand; and he ascribes this terrible disease to the debaucheries of his youth. He died on Sunday, September 13.

and gave it with his own hand to his son, or whether it was found after his death, with his other private papers, in the box that he had put into the hands of Christopher de Mora, his favourite; but this circumstance, of small importance in itself, is likewise of no consequence towards proving the authenticity of this piece, which is clear from many others. The copy that fell into my hands was sent me by the same person who sent one to the king; this was Bongars, his majesty's agent to the protestants in Germany, who had it from the landgrave of Hesse, and that prince from the cities of Venice and Genoa; and it is in every respect so exactly conformable to those which were sent into different places, that it removes all doubt of its being forged by some of his catholic majesty's enemies *.

In this piece Philip begins with a candid enumeration of all the faults he had committed, and places at their head his chimerical scheme of universal monarchy, the absurdity of which he earnestly endeavours to make his successor sensible of, by his example, and by that of Charles V. his father, whose instructions he adds to his own, altho' he confesses he had not profited by them. To this will he join the memoirs which had been left him by that emperor †, to the end that Philip III. might always keep them together. The emperor Charles V. being in the flower of his age, and of a healthy and vigorous

* Notwithstanding what M. de Sully says here, the piece which in his Memoirs is intitled, *Testament du Roi d'Espagne*, is neither the genuine latter will of that prince, nor even a faithful extract of it; which may easily be discovered, by comparing it with the particular and circumstantial one which M. De Thou gives us, liv. 120. But it might happen that this writing, which was likewise called, *Instruction du Roi d'Espagne à son fils*, might really have been a secret, and have nothing more in common with the will and testament of this prince,

than its being drawn, as is evident, in the same spirit, and in conformity to the same maxims, without the precaution that is commonly used in writings designed to be made public. As to the substance thereof, it is given us in the *Chronologie Septennaire*, in the same manner as in these Memoirs, only in a different style and order.

† M. De Thou finds nothing in the last will of Philip II. comparable to the wisdom of the dispositions, and the dignity of expression, shewn in that of Charles V.

1598. constitution, master of Spain and Germany, covered with glory and elated with success, formed the design of subduing the Infidels, and re-uniting all the powers of Europe, as well as all the religions, to his. After many years spent in fruitless attempts, he quitted his crown, and with it all his chimerical projects. Philip II. his son, suffered himself to be taken in the same snare, and succeeded still worse, which he was desirous his successor should know. The difference of religions, laws, and manners among the Europeans; their almost equal knowledge of the art of war, the great number of strong cities with which Europe is filled, and which made as many long and painful sieges necessary; the inconstancy of the several nations, who are always ready to obey the first comer, who offers to assist them in repelling a domination which it had taken immense labours to establish; all these Philip represented as unsurmountable obstacles to so great a design.

He acknowledges that he had not been always of the same opinion; that the impetuosity of youth had prevented him from making those prudent reflections at first, and that afterwards two great victories, and the divisions which tore the kingdom of France to pieces, contributed to continue his infatuation, and to make him reject with disdain all the offers that had been made him for an advantageous peace. And he thought he had reason to fear that his son would not make a better use of his understanding, it was by a declaration of all that a ridiculous ambition had made him unwisely undertake, that he sought to cure him.

He therefore acknowledges as a fault his having endeavoured to get himself declared emperor of all the new world; he accuses himself of a design to invade Italy upon frivolous pretences; to conquer the kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland, a project which in six years had cost him twenty millions in preparations only for a fleet with which he expected to overwhelm this power: this was the fleet called the

the Invincible Armado, which, however, was reduced to nothing at one stroke, in 1588, as soon as it set out; to bring the Low Countries into subjection; to overthrow the French monarchy, by taking advantage of the weakness of the last king, and prevailing upon his subjects, especially the ecclesiastics, to revolt; and lastly, to deprive his own uncle Ferdinand, and Maximilian, king of the Romans, his nephew *, of the empire. He observes, that these intrigues cost him above six hundred millions of ducats †; a proof of which, he tells his son, he would find in the accounts which he left in his cabinet, drawn up and written by himself. He blames himself less for his profusion of money, than that of human blood, which he caused to be shed: and indeed the confession he makes, that he had sacrificed twenty millions of men to his lust of dominion, and laid more countries waste, than all those he possessed in Europe, is enough to raise horror in every mind not wholly divested of humanity.

What has been the effect of all this? This is the reflection which he proposes to his son. Providence, as if it had thought itself concerned to prevent such wicked designs from succeeding, caused him to lose Germany, by the jealousy and hatred of his own relations; England, by the winds and storms; Ireland, by the treachery of its inhabitants, whom its great distance secured from his resentment; France, by the instability of the people, and their aversion to a foreign domination ‡, and lastly, by the great qua-

* "Philip II. was called, The devil of the south, *Dæmonum meridianum*, because he troubled all Europe, in the south of which Spain lies." Notes sur la Henriade.

† P. Matthieu says, that the Indies yielded to the king of Spain two hundred and sixty millions of gold in the space of sixty-four years; and that he might have conquered all Turkey with that trea-

sure only which he spent in Flanders. Tom. II. liv. 2. p. 266.

‡ In the genuine latter will of Philip II. is an article with regard to Henry IV. the omission of which in our Memoirs is sufficient to prove, that the piece to which this name is given is supposititious; and that is, That this prince being troubled with strong remorse of conscience for the usurpation of the kingdom of Navarre, recommends

1598. } lities of their king. So that the mighty preparations he had made, and the torrents of blood that had been shed, procured him no other advantage than the acquisition of the little kingdom of Portugal to his dominions.

After this, Philip made a more particular application of these instructions to the person and situation of the heir to his throne; and reduced to the following articles the politics from which no king of Spain ought ever to depart, and Philip III. less than any other, on account of his tender age: these articles were, first, To maintain with France the peace which Philip II. himself hoped to have concluded before his death, and this as well in consideration of his own interest and quiet, as out of regard to his people: To keep up a good correspondence with the pope, and to strengthen it by having always a great many cardinals in his interest: To be upon friendly terms with the emperor and his family; nevertheless, not to suffer the pensions to pass through his hands, which his interest required he should continue to the electors, princes, and prelates of Germany, in order to keep them always attached to him by those largesses; at the same time to take care to foment divisions among them, which would afford him the means of turning to his advantage those opportunities that time might produce for acquiring the empire: To be more vigilant on the side of Germany, as there is a greater multiplicity of interests in the northern countries than in any other place. Poland, Denmark, and Sweden, were powers from which he thought there was little to be apprehended; the first, not only on account of its distance, but

to his son what had been before recommended to himself by his father, namely, to cause this point to be carefully examined by the most able lawyers, in order to restore the crown to its rightful owner, if it should come out so, according to equity. Charles V. had said as

much to Philip II. and Ferdinand and Isâbel to Charles V. . . . In this manner to refer the executing of a disposition known to be just, to a successor who, one might be assured, would pay no regard to it, is what M. de Thou calls an impudent trifling with the Deity,

because

because the policy of the princes its neighbours, as well as its own, being mistaken, made the king of Poland rather the minister than the master of his subjects: the two others, by reason of their distance likewise, joined to their poverty and unskilfulness in war, were as little to be feared. He took care not to say the same with regard to France, England, and Flanders, which he considered as powers very formidable to Spain, and against which he recommended it to his son, to be always upon his guard. 1598.

With respect to England *, his advice was, to neglect nothing to prevent the three crowns which comprise the Britannic isles from being placed on the same head; an event which this able politician, from a spirit of prediction, mentioned as very near; and for that purpose not to regret the money which was distributed in those islands to make partisans, and to continue filling them with spies, but of another sort from those that were then there, whose fidelity Philip II. thought he had reason to suspect. To cultivate carefully those divisions which a diversity of religions might produce in that state, as well as in France: he considered those which the league gave rise to amongst us as things now stale and useless, since we had a king of Henry's capacity: but to give occasion for many other civil discords in each of those two states, and especially such as might keep them in war against each other, or at least in distrust and suspicion, which might be done, by favouring the pretensions of one upon the other, to which, their mutual hatred naturally incited them. To consider as the greatest misfortune imaginable that stroke which should join the United Provinces, and those two powers already united amongst themselves, in one common interest; since from thence must naturally result a power capable, says he, of subjecting sea and land. To find means to exclude

* They also make him say at the point of death when speaking of England, *Pacem cum Anglo, bellum cum reliquis*, "Peace with the English, and war with all the rest of the world."

1598. all the princes of Europe from the navigation of the two Indies, an attempt which could meet with no obstructions but from those three powers; and less from France than the two others, because she had no marine; a new motive for gaining possession of the Low Countries, and yet more of England.

However, amidst all these counsels that Philip gave his successor, he never advised him to enter into any war, not even with the rebels in the Low Countries, but earnestly dissuaded him from it. The conduct he recommended to be observed with the Provinces was, to grant a general pardon there; to require nothing of the people but that they should acknowledge the Spanish authority; to watch the behaviour of the governors, ministers, and officers, that were maintained there; not to continue them too long, nor to give them a too absolute power, because they would be the persons whom they would have the most reason to fear, if ever they entertained a design of heading the party.

If, however, Spain could not avoid engaging in a war, Philip was not willing that his successor should be deprived of that knowledge which experience had given him in that respect. He apprised him, that if he proposed not to sink under it, he must not undertake a war but in such favourable opportunities, as might, from time to time, present themselves; such as, changes in the government, civil dissensions, faults or necessities of the sovereigns, &c. This maxim of Philip, that a Prince should make himself acquainted even with the most particular inclinations of the princes his neighbours, is so true, and of such vast importance, that no change should ever happen in the states about him but what he should be prepared for, and in readiness to take advantage of that instant. He concluded this article by shewing the new king, that he is answerable for his actions at the tribunal of a God who judges wars, and, unhappily, not by the same rules which warlike princes lay down for themselves.

After

1598.

After these maxims, which regarded only the government abroad, Philip proceeded to those which he thought necessary for the government at home. He held it just, that a king of Spain, having nations under his command, between whose customs and manners there was as great a difference as distance in their realms, should study to govern each according to their respective character, and all with gentleness and moderation: That he should be acquainted with the talents and dispositions of his counsellors and secretaries, and chuse them himself: that he should likewise expedite all his dispatches, and render himself expert in the use of cyphers, that he might not expose a secret of consequence to be betrayed by a confidant: That he should be careful to seek for men of honour and sufficient abilities to bestow employments upon: That he should avoid giving any person any great cause of complaint, especially those of high quality; he observed, that the prince, his eldest son*, had suffered by it; and that he should make a just distinction between the ancient and the new nobility, in order to advance the last, as being generally susceptible of pure and disinterested sentiments: That he should lessen the number of the persons that were employed in the revenues, administration of justice, and the officers of the household; and recommended the same conduct to be observed with regard to the ecclesiastics; to which he added, that they, as well as others, ought to contribute to the necessities of the state, not only because they could better afford it, on account of their riches, but likewise because it became necessary for them to do so, if they would not forfeit the respect that was due to their character, by luxury, sloth, and impiety, the ordinary fruits of great riches, and the indolence in which they lived; but that he should increase the number of merchants, husbandmen, artists, and sol-

* Don Carlos, prince of Spain: it was by order of his father that he lost his life: and it appears that his crime was rather gaining over the affections of the grandees than treating them with contempt.

diers;

1598. diers; by whose industry, labour, and frugality alone, a state is supported against the ruin with which it is threatened by the dissoluteness of the other ranks. All principles, which like these, tend to maintain subordination and œconomy in a state, against corruption and disorder, merit praise from whatever mouth they proceed.

Philip closed his will with the article relating to domestic dispositions. He enjoined his successor to fulfil the promises and other clauses of the infant's marriage. He proposed a match for the young king, in which he had already made some advances, and privately regulated all the articles, which he informed him he would find in the hands of Loo. He observed, that no king ever loved his father's favourite; yet, notwithstanding, he would propose Christopher de Mora for his confident, who had been his own. Philip III. chose rather to prove the truth of the observation, than to comply with the request, and gave Mora's place to the marquis of Doria. He required, as an instance of respect due to the memory of a father, that all those persons to whom he had given employments should be continued in them; but he expressed himself in such a manner with regard to this article, as shewed he rather wished than hoped for a compliance with it. He recommended to his son the doctors Ollius and Vergius, who had attended him in his illness. He mentioned Antonio * Perès as a dangerous man, with whom it was necessary he should be reconciled; and afterwards not to permit him to stay either in France, Flanders, and especially Spain, but in the useless country of Italy. Philip concludes this piece with

* Antony Perès had been chief minister to Philip II. with whom he fell into disgrace for reasons which have no manner of relation to the subject of these Memoirs: he retired to Paris, where he died in 1611. He was a great politician, and a man of very considerable

parts; the following maxim was one of his, which includes a deal of meaning in three words, namely, *Roma, Confego, Piolago*; that is to say, To gain over the court of Rome, compose the council or proper persons, and to be master at sea.

a short maxim. To love God, to endeavour to be virtuous, and to profit by the precepts of a father. It must be confessed, that in this piece there are likewise many more strokes of * piety and resignation to the will of God, who he said had in mercy chastised him in this life rather than the other. 1598.

The first of these articles which was executed by the king of Spain was that relating to his marriage with the arch-duchess of Gratz †: he sent immediately after the death of his father to demand her in marriage; and in the beginning of the year following she set out for Spain, accompanied by her brother, the arch-duke Albert, with whom she landed upon the coast of Marseilles, for the benefit of that air. The duke of Guise, who was governor of the province, having notice of it, sent to let the king know of her arrival, and received orders to give this princess a very honourable reception; his majesty destined fifty thousand crowns to be expended for that purpose, and ordered them to be paid at Marseilles. I was upon the point of sending thither, to direct how this money was to be disposed of, either La-Font, or another of my domestics, who was only a footman of my wife's, a man of low stature and a mean figure, but in whom I had discovered so much capacity, fidelity, and prudence, that I thought I ought to endeavour his establishment: but there was no occasion for it, a person I had upon the spot was sufficient; for the arch-duchess, notwithstanding the instances that were made her by the duke of Guise and the city of Marseilles, would not enter any of the great cities, to avoid the ceremonial, but ordered tents to be set up upon the shore, where she rested and heard mass; the arch-duke, indeed, was so de-

* "He ordered his coffin to be brought him, which was made of copper, and a death's head to be laid upon a buffet, with a crown of gold by it;" says La Chronologie Septennaire, where, ann. 1598, we may find, together

with an account of all that this prince said and did in his last illness, the history also of his public and private life.

† Margaret of Austria, daughter to the arch-duke of Gratz.

1599. } vout as to visit the churches at Marseilles, but went to them incognito, and without any train; and after kissing the relics, returned without either eating or drinking.

This marriage united the two branches of the house of Austria by a double tie, the deceased king of Spain having already, on the 5th of May the preceding year, married the infanta Isabella, his daughter, to the arch-duke Albert, who, for that purpose, had divested himself of the cardinal's purple. This princess had, in appearance, a very large portion, since it was made up of no less than the seventeen provinces of the Low Countries, Franche-Comté, and Charolois: but the additional clauses that were inserted, that this new sovereign should be excluded from any commerce in the Indies, and not suffered to permit in his states the exercise of any religion but the Roman catholic, without which the donation was made void, reduced it, in effect, to nothing, by the difficulty he would find in obliging the Flemish to accept of such hard conditions.

The arch-duke, till he could go in person to Flanders, to remove all these obstacles, sent the high admiral * of Arragon thither, in the quality of his lieutenant-general, who performed some actions on the frontiers of Germany; and afterwards his cousin, the cardinal André, who issued out many edicts, but without effect. The house of Austria began to think there was danger in delays; therefore the arch-duke went himself into the Low Countries, taking with him his bride, on the 5th of September this year; the remainder of which was spent in threatenings on his side, which likewise produced nothing; so that there was a necessity for coming to open force: and this was the beginning of that long and bloody war between Spain and the Flemish, the pro-

* Consult the Chronologie Septennaire, both as to these military expeditions, and as to all that is here said of the marriage of the

king and the infanta of Spain, for the years 1598, 1599. Matthieu, *ibid.* p. 293, &c.

gress and event of which I shall take notice of each year.

1599.

At the same time that the marriage of his catholic majesty was celebrated in Spain, that of the princess Catherine with the prince of Bar* was celebrated at Paris. It was upon this establishment that the princess at length fixed her destiny, hitherto so uncertain. During the life of queen Catherine it was first proposed to marry her to the duke of Alençon; but Henry III. would not consent to it, on account of the hatred he bore to his brother. Afterwards, they talked of giving her to Henry III. himself; but this the queen-mother opposed, through the aversion she had to the family of Navarre. This princess, in her turn, refused the old duke of Lorraine, because he had children by a former marriage. The king of Spain demanded her, on condition of a strict union between the king of Navarre and him, which the first of these princes would not hear of. The princess was afterwards sought by the duke of Savoy; but in circumstances wherein this marriage might prove prejudicial to the protestant religion, and therefore the protestants themselves threw difficulties in the way. She would not have the prince of Condé on account of his poverty; and refused the king of Scotland, without giving any good reason for it. The prince of Enhalt made likewise his advances. And in those transports of anger with which she was sometimes animated against the king her brother, she reproached him, that he would have thrown her into the arms of three or four other foreign princes, or, as she called them, gentlemen, for the payment of their subsidies. Lastly, her inclination for the count of Soissons made her reject the duke of Montpensier, who was a suitable match for her. At length, the necessity of procuring an

* Henry, duke of Bar, who became duke of Lorraine, after the death of his father, Charles II. "The king gave his sister, at her

"marriage, three hundred thousand crowns of gold for her portion," says the historian Matthieu, *ibid.* p. 278.

establish-

1599. establishment determined her to accept the prince of Bar.

This designed marriage was no sooner made public, than the ecclesiastics in general, and the French bishops in particular, then assembled at Paris, found, in the difference of religion of the two parties, a reason for hindering its conclusion, which they did not suffer to escape them. The first measure they took was to hinder, at Rome, with all their power, the dispatching of the dispensation, without which, they imagined, it was not possible to proceed to the celebration of the marriage. In this respect, they could not trust the care of their interests to one more faithful than D'Offat, who nevertheless was sent to this court to manage those of the king. But this is not the first time, nor will it be the last, that this ecclesiastic has suffered from me, and will again, the reproach of having not only exceeded but betrayed his commission. If I may give credit to the memorial from Rome which has been already mentioned, D'Offat, in the name of the whole party of whom he was the instrument, neglected nothing to dissuade the pope from granting the dispensation, which he was particularly employed by his majesty to solicit. These persons gave his holiness to understand, that if he continued firm in his refusal to grant this favour, it would produce two things equally to be desired; one, that the princess would turn catholic; the other, that a such a change would be thought by the protestants an effect of the violence used to her by the king her brother, for that purpose, which would increase the distrust they already openly shewed of his majesty, make them consider him as their enemy and declared persecutor, and bring on, at length, that intestine war which, according to them, was so much to be desired, for the interests of the holy father and the true religion.

The clergy did not stop here; they made remonstrances severe enough to merit the title of threats. His majesty had the complaisance to listen to them, and

and permitted a conference to be held, in which doctor Du-Val on one side, and the minister Tile-
 nus on the other, endeavouring to support their
 cause, debated with much heat, and, in my opi-
 nion, to little purpose; though each boasted after-
 wards, that he had vanquished his adversary. I
 speak as one who was a witness of the dispute, for I
 suffered myself to be drawn along with the crowd
 which ran thither, as to a very interesting spectacle.
 I did not come in till toward the conclusion, when
 the two disputants were beginning to sink under the
 fatigue. I know not for what reason they were de-
 sirous of making me play the part of a judge upon
 this occasion; probably because they were informed
 I had been employed by his majesty to draw up the
 articles of marriage between the princess Catherine
 and the prince of Bar. They were beginning to
 repeat to me all the points of a dispute, which had
 already taken up several hours; but I earnestly in-
 treated them to spare me either this trouble or this
 honour, telling them, that if two such learned men
 had not been able to reconcile the canon and decrees
 of the pope with the holy scripture, or to prove that
 such a task was impossible, it could not be expected
 that such an ignorant person as I should be equal to
 it; and this was really my opinion.

This conference not having produced all the
 effects the clergy expected from it*, and finding
 likewise that they succeeded no better at Rome, they
 declared, that nothing should be capable of prevail-
 ing upon them to give their consent to this marriage.
 Little regard would have been paid to this; but as
 there was a necessity for getting a bishop to perform
 this ceremony, and that all those gentlemen held to-
 gether, hence arose an obstacle, upon which they
 founded their last hopes.

* Prefixe says, that the king not being able to accomplish her
 conversion, though he made use of threatnings, said one day to the duke
 of Bar, "My good cousin, 'tis your business to break her."

1599.

In this perplexity the king was advised to have recourse to the archbishop † of Rouen, from whom, being his natural brother, and obliged to him for the bishopric, more complaisance was to be expected; besides, his majesty, as well as all France, knew this prelate to be not very scrupulous (to say no more) in matters of religion. However, upon the first proposition made him by the king, the archbishop, like a devout rebel, overwhelmed him with citations, as often ill as well chosen, from the holy fathers, the holy canons, and the holy scriptures. The king, astonished, as may be well imagined, at such uncommon language from a man who generally talked of quite different matters, could hardly hinder himself from laughing in his face, asking him, by what miracle it was that he had become so learned and conscientious? Supposing, however, the archbishop might be wrought upon by serious arguments to comply, he tried their efficacy; but finding him still untractable, he grew angry, and reproached him with his ingratitude. "Since you carry it so high," added Henry, resuming his first air of pleasantry, "I will send you a great doctor, your usual confessor, who is wonderfully skilful in cases of conscience." This great doctor and director of consciences was Roquelaure, an old companion of monsieur de Rouen's, and an actual sharer in his debauches, by whose intreaty he had obtained the archbishopric. The prelate understood perfectly well the meaning of this little threat, and the embarrassment he appeared to be in was a proof that he was under some apprehensions of those great advantages which an accustomed familiarity would give Roquelaure over him, without the addition of those which he derived from that wit which all the court acknowledged to be free, ingenious, and fruitful in the most happy sallies; and the archbishop himself was

† Charles, the natural son of Antony of Navarre by mademoiselle de La-Beraudiere de La-Guiche, otherwise called La-Rouët, who was one of the maids of honour to the queen mother.

not often guilty of carrying too far the respect due to the episcopal character. 1599.

The king having quitted monsieur de Rouen, sent for Roquelaure; "Do you know, Roquelaure, said he to him, that your archbishop takes upon him to play the prelate and doctor, and would quote the holy canons to me, which I believe he understands as little of as you or I; however, by his refusal my sister's marriage is stopped: therefore pray go to him, and talk to him as you used to do, and put him in mind of past times."

"By the Lord, sire, replied Roquelaure, this is not well done of him; for it is high time, in my opinion, that our sister Kate should taste the sweets of marriage. But pray, sire, tell me what reasons this fine fellow of a bishop gave you for his refusal? he seldom has much better to give than myself. I will go to him and teach him his duty."

He did not fail to perform his promise. "What is this I hear, archbishop?" said he, as soon as he entered his apartment: "they tell me you have been playing the coxcomb; by the Lord, I will not suffer it; it derogates too much from my honour, since every one says you are governed by me. Know you not that at your entreaty I became your security to the king, when I prevailed upon him to give you the archbishopric of Rouen; therefore I desire you would not make me out a liar, by continuing thus obstinately to act like a fool: this might do between you and I, who are often seen quarrelling at dice, but such disputes must not be thought on when our master's service and his absolute commands are in question."

"Merciful God! replied monsieur de Rouen, what is this you would have me to do, Roquelaure? What! must I make myself ridiculous, and suffer the reproaches of all the other prelates, by an action which the whole world agrees is unjustifiable, and which every one of the bishops to whom it has been proposed by the king has refused?"

1599.

“ ed?” “ Hold a little, pray, interrupted Ro-
 quelaure: there is a wide difference between them
 “ and you; for those men have puzzled their brains
 “ so much about Greek and Latin, that they are
 “ become fools—and you are the king’s brother,
 “ and obliged to obeyed all his commands, without
 “ any hesitation: the king did not make you an
 “ archbishop to preach to him, and quote the ca-
 “ nons, but to do whatever his service required:
 “ if you continue this perverseness and obstinacy, I
 “ will acquaint Jeanneton de Condom, Bernarde
 “ l’Eveillee, and master Julian with the whole story:
 “ Do you understand me? don’t let me tell you
 “ this a second time: know, that nothing ought to
 “ be so dear to you as the king’s favour, which,
 “ together with my solicitations, have done you
 “ more good than all the Greek and Latin of the
 “ others: By the Lord, it is a fine thing to hear
 “ you talk of the canons, of which you know as
 “ little, as of High-dutch.” Monsieur de Rouen
 endeavoured to persuade him, that he ought to quit
 that ludicrous style, which was agreeable enough
 when he was in his youth; and hinted something
 concerning paradise to him. “ How! paradise!
 “ interrupted Roquelaure: Are you such an ass to
 “ talk of a place, where you have never been, where
 “ you know not what is doing, or whether you shall
 “ be admitted when you attempt to get in till ano-
 “ ther time!” “ Yes, yes, said the archbishop,
 “ I shall be admitted there, do not doubt of it.”
 “ You talk finely, said his companion, pressing still
 “ harder upon him. By the Lord, I believe para-
 “ dise is as little designed for you as the Louvre for
 “ me: but let us lay aside a little your paradise,
 “ your canons, and your conscience, and do you
 “ now resolve to marry the princess to the prince of
 “ Bar; for if you fail, I shall take from you three
 “ or four paltry Latin words that you have always
 “ in your mouth; farther the said deponent know-
 “ eth not: and then adieu to the cross and mitre;

“ and, what is worse, to your fine palace of Gail-
 “ lon, and revenue of ten thousand crowns.”

1599.

Many other things passed between these two men, which may be guessed at by this sample. Roquelauze would not leave the archbishop till he had made him promise to marry the princess, and accordingly he was the person that performed the ceremony*. I received from both parties very magnificent presents, in return for the pains I had taken; among others, a Spanish horse of great value, which was given me by the duke of Lorrain: I sent him to his majesty, who ordered me to keep him.

This was not the only occasion on which the clergy were against the king; they made a more resolute and likewise a more important opposition against the registering the edict of Nantes, which always appeared to them a difficult morsel to digest: as they had for almost a year held an assembly at Paris on this account, they had had time to prejudice the parliament, and other sovereign courts, as well as the Sorbonne, against this edict. All these bodies, as soon as it was published, rebelled, and occasioned disorders that may be better imagined than described. It was the subject of all discourse; every one applied himself to criticise the piece, and to offer different arguments against it, all which were far from being just, as well as the reasons the parliament gave for not registering it: but that candor and sincerity I have professed to observe here in matters that nearest concern me, oblige me to confess, that they were not absolutely to blame.

* “ The ceremony was performed one Sunday morning, says the *Chronologie Septennaire*. . . The king came to fetch the lady Catherine, his sister, when she was dressed; and leading her by the hand into his closet, whither her said future spouse had come before her, he ordered M. . . the archbishop of Rouen, to marry them,

“ &c. and that it was his pleasure it should be so. This the archbishop at first refused, alledging, that the usual solemnity ought to have been observed therein. To which the king very learnedly made answer, That his presence supplied the want of all other solemnity, and that his closet was a consecrated place.”

1599.

For example, the protestants, by one of the articles of the edict, were permitted to call and hold all sorts of assemblies, convocations, &c. when and where they pleased, without asking leave either of his majesty or the magistrates; and likewise to admit in them all foreigners whatever, without acquainting any superior tribunal: as also on their side, to be present, without licence, at the assemblies which were held amongst the foreigners. It is very plain, that a point as absolutely contrary to all the laws of the kingdom, as prejudicial to the authority of the king *, the right of the magistracy, and the utility and quiet of the people, could not have been obtained but by stratagem; and it was upon this point likewise that the enemies of the protestants insisted chiefly, in the several remonstrances they made to the king, each alledging those arguments in which they were most interested. The parliament remonstrated, that this article completed the ruin of their authority, which the clergy had already confined to such narrow limits, as well as the king's (for it was pretended, that these two authorities were so closely connected that they could not be separated) that if appeals against the irregular exertion of ecclesiastical authority should be taken away, they would have only the shadow of any power. The clergy and the Sorbonne complained of the superiority this concession would give

* " This point, says le Septenaire, the marechal de Bouillon had managed with some persons, who perhaps were not aware of the danger of it; but the sieur Berthier, who was agent for the clergy, and bishop of Rieux, disputed it so warmly with the marechal, in the presence of the king, that after hearing his reasons, and in regard of the importance of the point itself, his majesty ordered it to be erased." Ann. 1599. p. 66. . This account of M. Cayet's agrees with that of

F. Matthieu, tom. II. liv. ii. p. 280, & seq. so that the article of the edict of Nantes, which was so warmly contested, being apparently the eighty-second, is at present as disadvantageous to the calvinists, as it was formerly favourable to them; since it forbids them all cabals, negotiations, intelligences, assemblies, councils, leagues, associations, either in or out of the kingdom, assessments and raising of money, &c. without his majesty's express permission.

the protestant over the catholic church in France, which had never been possessed of so large a power in its jurisdiction ; and this was certainly true. Lastly, they enumerated all the bad consequences which this absolute independence of the French huguenots might produce either amongst themselves, or their associations with all the enemies of France in Europe. 1599.

The king had not yet examined the edict with care: all he knew of it was from a slight reading, in which he had, doubtless, glanced over this clause, or probably wholly omitted it. The surprize he discovered to those who talked to him in that strain, shewed he had been deceived ; and he promised them to consider it attentively, and give them an answer. When they left him, he immediately sent for me, and shewing me the edict, I concealed from him none of the sentiments I have delivered heré: I added, that by too great zeal to make that article advantageous for the protestants, I thought he was doing them a mischief, in that it would give large scope for all the slander that would be invented against the worthy men of the party, of their intriguing with foreigners against the state, or of suffering themselves to be suborned. Henry, still more confirmed in his opinion, sent me back with orders to prepare myself to support all these motives in the assembly of the protestants, which he would have to be called immediately ; while he, in the mean time, went to demand an explanation of the edict from those who had drawn it up.

Messieurs De Schomberg, De Thou, Calignon, and Jeannin (for the king sent directly for them all four) were greatly disconcerted by the reproaches the king made them of having abused his confidence. Schomberg and De Thou, in the name of them all, replied, that they had been obliged to act in the manner they had done, by the threats of messieurs de Bouillon and de La-Tremouille, who declared, in the name of the whole party, that if
S 4 this

1599. this article was denied to them they would break all agreement, and even commence war against the catholics; which seemed to them of the utmost consequence, the peace with Spain labouring at that time under great difficulties. The king contenting himself with this excuse, ordered Berthier, syndic of the clergy, to report it to the assembly, and to add from him, that amongst four persons, to whom he had committed the care of drawing up the edict, there being no protestant but Calignon, he could not persuade himself that the three others would have given the protestant religion such an advantage over the catholic. The answer made by the bishops shewed plainly, that they had not the same opinion of those three gentlemen that his majesty had; they were treated in full assembly as false catholics, who in many articles agreed with the protestants, and had no scruple about the rest. Whilst we condemn this second imputation * as it deserves to be, we still allow, that with regard to the first, every thing made against the writers of the edict; and that their reply to his majesty did not so effectually destroy the opinion that might be conceived of it, as the silence they observed in his presence gave it strength †.

The duke of Bouillon, however, had certainly those sentiments they attributed to him. By en-

* If a certain private conversation be true, which D'Aubigné makes the president De Thou to hold with the duke de la Tremouille, when he was sent by his majesty to the assembly of the calvinists, the suspicions of the clergy would not be ill founded: "You have too much judgment, says the president to him, not to know very well, that considering the point at which matters now stand, and the concessions we have already made you, the demands which you may make are not at their utmost height" M. de Schomberg is a lu-

theran, and very far from being a good calvinist; as for my own part, you shall know the inmost thought of my heart." Tom. III. lib. v. ch. i. But it is very probable that D'Aubigné has related this conversation upon the credit of persons not to be depended on, as also some other points of his history, which at that time drew an arrest of parliament upon that work.

† M. de Sully's sincerity in all this is so remarkable, that we cannot, in my opinion, sufficiently admire it in a protestant.

deavouring

deavouring to come at the bottom of the affair, I ^{1599.} learnt that he had in reality discovered an insurmountable obstinacy: but was there no other means to make the others more reasonable? and then, what could he do by himself? If all the protestants were like the duke de Bouillon, what could the writers of the edict mean by this blind compliance with their inclinations? was the king and the realm to be betrayed for necessity? as nothing could be thought worse than that by honest and skilful negotiators, they can hardly be charged with such a notion. For my own part, I always thought Bouillon the sole favourer of the project contained in that article, as he had been the author of it: he considered only himself, and disregarded others. I will now shew the ultimate design of all his politics.

The duke of Bouillon, in order to terminate in his favour the dispute for precedency between him and the dukes and peers of France; as well as the marechals that were more antient than him, formed a design to get his sovereignty of Sedan * declared a fief of the empire. But this prerogative was not to deprive him of all communication with the protestant French lords, otherwise he would lose more than he gained. The medium he thought upon to reconcile his interest with his ambition, was to have his church of Sedan comprehended in the protestant churches of France. This he did by means of the article in question: mean time he would continue to make himself be treated as a foreign prince.

Berthier came back to the king, to give him an account of the disposition in which he found the prelates of the assembly, together with the result of their deliberations; which was to take from the four persons who drew up the edict all cognizance of the affairs of religion; and the disputed article, and some others less essential, should be mended; which his majesty likewise promised.

* Consult l' Histoire du duc de Bouillon, which we have quoted several times already, liv. v.

1599.

Nevertheless, the assembly of the chief protestants then at Paris having been summoned the day after that in which this agreement betwixt the king and the commissaries was made, I received, as usual, a note inviting me to be there. I had left off going to these assemblies, ever since I perceived that my presence laid a restraint upon three or four of the leading men in it, and was good for nothing but to produce altercations. I deceived them, by presenting myself at this. The duke of Bouillon easily comprehended the design which had brought me there thus contrary to my usual custom, and hinted as much with an ironical severity; which I answered, by excusing myself on account of the multiplicity of affairs that took up my time, and by feigning not to know the occasion on which the present assembly was held. I gave no attention to the swollen air which the duke de La-Tremouille assumed, nor the expression he let fall to intimate, that he was not persuaded of the truth of what I said; but went and seated myself near messieurs de Mouy, de Clermont, and de Sainte-Marie-Du-Mont, who informed me of the business that was to be brought upon the carpet; assuring me, that the article which had made so much noise was disapproved of by almost all the protestants; and that none but messieurs de Bouillon, de la-Tremouille, Du-Plessis, and some others of the cabal, insisted on it, in order to bring on a civil war. They could not obtain their point, notwithstanding the tumults they had occasioned, and the clamours they made in the assembly. When it came to the vote it was carried against them, the contrary opinion prevailed, and with reason, for the best arguments were on our side*.

* The edict of Nantes was at length verified on Thursday the 25th of February this same year, after many difficulties started by the clergy, the university, and parliament. It was upon this occasion that Henry IV. told the bishops;

" You have exhorted me concerning my duty; let me now exhort you concerning yours: let us excite a mutual emulation in each other, which of us shall perform their parts the best. My predecessors gave you good

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They likewise agreed upon some qualifications with regard to two or three other articles, in which the public good did not seem to be sufficiently considered. The justice and mildness of Henry's conduct was acknowledged by every one. After the affair was thus settled, he explained his motives to the greater number; and for the rest, he thought only of hindering them from doing worse.

He acted with the same prudence with respect to some disaffected catholics, who being unwilling to appear openly themselves, brought one Martha Brosfier, a pretended demoniac, in play, who was become the object of the people's curiosity, who are always struck with the marvellous, whether true or false. It is indeed surprising, that a matter so ridiculous in itself, and which was even below the consideration of the mob, should be talked on for a year and a half, and become an affair of state: one half of the world suffer themselves to be dazzled by every thing that seems to be supernatural, and others

" words; but I, with my grey
" jacket on, will shew you good
" deeds: though I am all grizzled
" without, yet I am all gold with-
" in: I will look into your pa-
" pers, and answer them as fa-
" vourably as I can." The fol-
" lowing was the return he made to
" the parliament, when they came
" to make him remonstrances; "You
" see me in my closet, where I
" come to speak with you, not
" in my royal robes, nor with my
" sword and other military habi-
" liments on, as my predecessors
" were wont, nor like a prince
" who is to receive an ambassador,
" but clad like the father of a fa-
" mily, in his plain doublet, to
" speak familiarly with his chil-
" dren; what I have to say to you
" is, to intreat you would register,
" with the usual solemnities, the
" edict which I have granted to
" those of the calvinist religion.
" What I have done is for the sake

" of peace, which I have conclud-
" ed with the neighbouring powers
" around me, and would have the
" same observed within my own
" dominions." After he had told
" them the reasons that induced him
" to make this edict, he added;
" Such as would hinder my edict
" from passing, are for war, which
" I will to-morrow declare against
" the protestants, but I will not
" carry it on, I will send them to
" it. I made the edict, and would
" have it observed: my will ought
" to be a sufficient reason; for in
" an obedient state they never ask
" their prince any other. I am
" king, I speak to you as such, and
" I will be obeyed." *Peref. ibid.*
" and *Journal d' Henry IV. ibid.*
" See also in *M. De Thou*, and in *le*
" *Septennaire*, anno 1599, the seve-
" ral modifications which were ad-
" ded to the edict of Nantes, and all
" the conferences held on this occa-
" sion.

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1599. are kept in awe, not by the thing itself, but by the motives upon which it is founded. Martha Brosfier met with many protectors among the clergy, even as far as Rome, whither she took care to be carried. The king, without any extraordinary notice, allowed * both the time and means necessary to make itself known: after which, the whole trick ended in the general contempt of its authors and actresses.

The death of a great many persons of distinction afforded matter for other discourse. The chancellor de Chiverny, Schomberg, and D'Incarville; all three members of the council of finances, dy-

* We have a very curious account of all that relates to this pretended demoniac in M. De Thou, at the beginning of book cxxiii. ann. 1599. an abstract of which is as follows: One James Brosfier, a baker at Romorantin in Sologne, taking a dislike to his own trade, turned conjurer, with a design to travel about the country with his three daughters, Martha, Silvina, and Mary; the eldest, who is the person spoken of here, had succeeded so well, by the instructions which her father had given her, to counterfeit a demoniac, that she imposed upon every body at Orleans and Cleri, except Charles Miron, bishop of Angers, who found out the imposture, by putting common water in the place of holy water, and holy in the place of common; by repeating a verse from Virgil instead of the beginning of the exorcism, and touching her with a key instead of his episcopal crozier. This did not hinder her from coming to Paris, where she pitched upon the church of St. Genevieve for the scene on which to shew herself to the people, who flocked thither in great numbers. She imposed upon all the credulous ecclesiastics, and upon the capuchins, who began to exorcise her in good earnest; and even upon some physicians whom Henry IV. had sent to see her: though all the

restly deposed formall against her, especially Michael Marefcot, one of the physicians, who publicly convicted her of not understanding Greek or Latin, and having no greater capacity than what is common to her sex; and, in short, of being an impostor and arrant cheat. But notwithstanding all this, the ecclesiastics and preachers knew so well how to interest religion in this affair, and the pretended demoniac played her part so well, that the arret of parliament, that enjoined her, as also her father, to return home, how wise and reasonable soever it was, occasioned strange murmurings, and almost a revolt in Paris: and this gave the king a deal of uneasiness, who saw, that what enemies he had remaining of the old league, did appear again on this occasion. Alexander de La-Rochefoucaut, lord of Saint-Martin, and count de Randan, even undertook to revive this affair, by causing Martha to be sent to Avignon, and thence to Rome, where she gained still more partisans. But, unluckily for her, cardinal D'Ossat was there, who employed himself so effectually in this affair, that at length Martha and all her family saw themselves utterly abandoned; and they lived and died despised and quite miserable. Consult also the other historians.

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ing within a short time of each other, occasioned a great alteration of affairs: the seals were given to Bellievre; the office of comptroller-general, which D'Incarville had possessed, was, at my solicitation, granted to De Vienne; and that of superintendant of the finances was restored in my favour. Henry having sent for me to the garden of the Tuilleries, where he was walking, told me that he was resolved to entrust the care of the finances to one man only; and assuming a very serious manner, made me promise to give freely my opinion of that man, when he should name him to me. Having assured him that I would, he smiled, and tapping my cheek, told me, that I had reason to know him well, since it was myself. His majesty bestowed on me likewise the post of surveyor of the highways, for which he sent me the patents, together with those of superintendant of the fortifications. And Sancy, resigning himself up to his usual whims*, having thought proper to retire from the council, and to give up the office of overseer of the works, the king added these employments likewise to the other favours he loaded me with. The appointments for the superintendancy were settled at the rate of twenty thousand livres; those of surveyor of the highways, and of Paris in particular, were ten thousand livres.

His majesty was so well pleased with this method of fixing the rate of salaries, that he was likewise desirous of regulating in the same manner the gratuities he proposed to give me, as well, he said, to prevent me from expecting a gratuity for every considerable service I did him, as to spare himself the trouble of causing all the presents he made me to be registered, since without that, I would not receive any from him, however little their value was: he therefore declared to me, that all those rewards

* Joseph Scalliger speaks, as well as our author, of M. de Sancy as a fanatic, and as very subject to enthusiastic reveries.

1599.

and presents should for the future be comprised in one settled gratuity, which should be paid me the beginning of every year, in the form of letters patents, registered by the parliament; and asked me beforehand if I was satisfied with the sum, which was sixty thousand livres: adding, that it was his desire, that with this money I should purchase estates, which I should be at liberty to dispose of in favour of those of my children who made themselves most worthy of my affection, in order to keep them more firmly attached to me. This goodness of the king's merited my most grateful acknowledgments. However, this regulation which I have mentioned here was not made till the year 1600, and did not begin to take place till the year 1601.

Mademoiselle de Bourbon * died likewise this year: and monsieur D'Espinaç †, archbishop of Lyons, who may be said to have tasted of all kinds of fortunes; then madam la Connetable; and after her madam de Beaufort: these two last deaths made a prodigious noise every where, and were attended with a great similarity of very uncommon circumstances; both were seized with a violent distemper, that lasted only three or four days; and both, though extremely beautiful, became horribly disfigured, which, together with some other symptoms, that at any other time would have been thought natural, or only the effects of poison, raised a report in the world, that the deaths of these two young ladies, as well as their elevation, was the work of the devil, who made them pay for that short felicity he had procured them. And this was certainly believed, not only amongst the people

* She was daughter to Henry I. the prince of Condé, by his first wife, the princess of Nevers, marchioness de L'Isle, &c.

† Peter D'Espinaç: he had been a great partisan of the league: however, P. Matthieu assures, that

he had done considerable services to Henry IV. against Spain, tom. II. liv. ii. p. 308. where he gives an elogium of his virtues. M. De Thou, on the contrary, represents him, in book xc. as an incestuous and simoniacal person.

generally credulous to a high degree of folly, but the courtiers themselves: so prevalent at that time was the infection of trading in the occult sciences, and so great was the hatred and envy to these two ladies, on account of the high rank they enjoyed. 1599.

This is what was related of the constable's* lady, and (as it is said) by the ladies that were then at her house: She was conversing gayly with them in her closet, when one of her women entered in great terror, and told her that a certain person, who called himself a gentleman, and had indeed a good presence, saying that he was quite black, and of a gigantic stature, had just entered her anti-chamber, and desired to speak to her about affairs of great consequence, which he could not communicate to any but her. At every circumstance relating to this extraordinary courier, which the woman was ordered to describe minutely, the lady was seen to turn pale, and was so oppressed with grief, that she could scarce tell her woman to entreat the gentleman, in her name, to defer his visit to another time; to which he replied, in a tone that filled the messenger with horror, that since the lady would not come willingly, he would take the trouble to go and seek her in her closet. She, who was still more afraid of a public than a private audience, resolved at last to go to him, but with all the marks of a deep despair.

The terrible message performed, she returned to her company, bathed in tears, and half dead with dismay; she had only time to speak a few words to take leave of them, particularly of three ladies who were her friends, and to assure them that she should never see them more. That instant she was seized with exquisite pains, and died at the end of three days, inspiring all who saw her with horror at the frightful change of every feature in her face. Of this story the wise thought as they ought to think.

* Louisa de Budos, second wife to Henry, Constable de Montmorency, was daughter to James de Budos, viscount de Portes.

1599.

Madam de Beaufort was the weakest of her sex with regard to divination; she made no secret of her consulting with astrologers, and always had a great many of them about her, who never quitted her; and what is most surprising, although she always, doubtless, paid them well, yet they never foretold her any thing but what was disagreeable: one said, that she would never be married but once; another, that she should die young; a third, that she should take care of being with child; and a fourth, that she should be betrayed by one of her friends. Hence proceeded that melancholy which oppressed her, and which she could never afterwards get rid of. Gracienne, one of her women, has since told me, that she would retire from all company to pass whole nights in grief, and in weeping on account of these predictions.

Being then far advanced in her pregnancy, many persons will be at no loss to guess the cause of that misfortune which attended it. She was already greatly indisposed both in body and mind, when, at the latter end of Lent, she was desirous of making one of the party with the king at Fontainebleau: she staid there but a few days. The king, who was not willing to incur the censure of keeping this lady with him during the Easter holidays, intreated her to leave him to spend them at Fontainebleau, and to return herself to Paris*. Madam de Beaufort received this order with tears: it was still worse when they came to part; Henry, on his side, more passionately fond than ever of this lady, who had already brought him two sons, and a daughter, named Henrietta, did himself equal violence. He conducted her half-way to Paris†; and although they proposed only an absence of a few days, yet they dreaded the moment of parting, as if it had

* According to P. Matthieu, tom. II. liv. ii. p. 316. she came to Paris, in order to have the articles of the purchase of Chateaufort in Perche expedited.

† At Melun she lay the day before, whence the king conducted her to the boat in which she embarked to come down to the arsenal.

been for a much longer time. Those who are inclined to give faith to presages, will lay some stress upon this relation. The two lovers several times renewed their parting endearments, and in every thing they said to each other at that moment, some people have pretended to find proofs of those presages of an inevitable fate.

1599.

Madam de Beaufort spoke to the king as if for the last time*; she recommended to him her children, her house of Monceaux, and her domestics: the king listened to her, but, instead of comforting her, gave way to a sympathising grief. Again they took leave of each other, and a secret emotion again drew them to each other's arms. Henry would not so easily have torn himself from her, if the marechal D'Ornano, Roquelaure, and Frontenac, had not taken him away by force. At length they prevailed upon him to return to Fontainebleau; and the last words he said were, to recommend his mistress to the conduct of La-Varenne, with orders to provide every thing she wanted, and to conduct her safely to the house of Zamet, to whom he had chosen to confide the care of a person so dear to him.

I was at Paris when the duchess of Beaufort arrived there; and intending to go with my wife a few days after to receive the communion at Rosny, whither I carried the prince and princess of Orange, to whom I was desirous of shewing the new buildings which the king's liberality had enabled me to raise there; I thought I was under a necessity of waiting upon this lady to take my leave of her. She no longer remembered any thing that had passed at Saint-Germain, but gave me a most obliging reception: not daring to explain herself clearly upon that compliance with her projects to which she so ardently wished to bring me, she contented

* D'Aubigné speaks in the same manner of this parting. tom. liv. v. ch. iii.

1599. herself with endeavouring to engage me in her interests, by mingling with those civilities which she shewed but to few persons, words that carried a double sense, and hinted to me a boundless grandeur, if I would relax a little of the severity of my counsels to the king with regard to her. I, who was as little moved with the chimeras that filled her head, as with those she thought to inspire me with, pretended not to understand any part of a discourse so intelligible; and answered her in equivocal terms with general protestations of respect, attachment, and devotion; which signify what one will.

At my return home, I desired my wife to pay the same compliment to the duchess: she was received with equal tenderness: madam de Beaufort intreating her to love her, and to be with her as a friend, entered into confidences, that would have seemed the last instance of the most intimate friendship to those who, like madam de Rosny, were ignorant that the duchess, who had no great share of understanding, was not very delicate in the choice of her confidants: it was her highest pleasure, to entertain any person she first saw with her schemes and expectations; and the more those she conversed with were her inferiors, the less restraint she laid on herself; for then she no longer guarded her expressions, and often assumed the airs of a queen.

She had as little caution with respect to what really happened, as to what she was in expectation would happen; too much simplicity on such occasions gave rise probably to those reports which were spread in the world concerning some irregularities in her conduct when she was very young. These censures, however, appeared to me to be the mere effect of the malice of her enemies; for it could not be imagined that a woman would carry her imprudence and folly so far as to say both good and ill of herself indifferently; and I never thought I had any reason to reproach myself with having, for six years, confined a woman named La Rouffe, who
was

was one of her servants, and her husband, in the Bastile, who, after the death of this lady, continued to load her memory with the utmost infamy: for although all they said had been true, yet the respect that was due to her family, and still more to the tenderness the king had for her and the children she brought him, ought to have silenced their slanders. 1599.

Madam De Rosny could not help being surprised at the duchess's discourse, and was still more so, when this lady making an awkward assemblage of the civilities which are practised between equals, and these airs of a queen, told her she might come to her *coucher* and *lever* whenever she pleased; and many other speeches of the same kind. My wife, as well as every one else, concluded there would be a great change in the duchess's fortune, and returned home full of these reflections, which she communicated to me. I had not even disclosed to my wife what had passed between the king and me upon this subject, as well as the scene of St. Germain: I promised her to acquaint her with the true state of things, provided she would not tell the princess of Orange what madam de Beaufort had said to her; and we set out together for Rosny.

Two days after, which was the Saturday before Easter, as I was performing my promise to madam de Rosny, and acquainting her with the duchess's design to get herself declared queen, all the practices of her relations and dependants for that purpose, the struggles the king had in his own mind, and the resolution he had at length taken to overcome himself, adding some reflections upon the calamities which a contrary conduct would bring upon the kingdom, I heard the bell of the first gate of the castle without the moat ring; and none of my servants answering, as it was yet scarcely day, the bell was rung with more violence, and a voice several times repeated, *I come from the king*. Immediately I wakened a footman, and while he went to

1599. open the gate, I slipped on a night-gown, and ran down stairs, greatly alarmed at being sent to so early in the morning.

The courier said that he had travelled all night to tell me that the king desired I would come instantly to Fontainebleau: his countenance had so deep a concern on it, that I asked him if the king was ill? "No," he replied, "but he is in the utmost affliction: madam the duchess is dead." The news appeared to me so improbable that I made him repeat it several times; and when convinced that it was true, I felt my mind divided between my grief for the condition to which her death reduced the king, and my joy for the advantage all France would gain by it, which was increased by my being fully persuaded in my own mind, that the king, by this transitory sorrow, would purchase a release from a thousand anxieties, and much more anguish of heart than what he now actually suffered. I went up again to my wife's chamber full of these reflexions, "You will neither go to the duchess's *coucher* nor *lever*," said I, "for she is dead." I brought the courier up with me, that while I dressed, and he breakfasted, he might inform us of all the circumstances of this great event, which was still better related in the letter La Varenne had written from Paris to the king, and which his majesty sent me by the courier, together with a second from La Varenne, directed to myself.

Zamet* had received his guest with all the assiduity of a courtier who is solicitous to please, and neglected nothing which he thought might contribute to make her pass the time agreeably. On Maundy-Thursdai madam de Beaufort, after din-

* Sebastian Zamet, a rich private gentleman, was an Italian and a native of Lucca: but he got himself naturalized in 1581, together with his two brothers Horace and John Antony. He desired the notary who drew up his daughter's

contract of marriage, to style him lord of seventeen hundred thousand crowns. Henry IV. had pitched on his house for his meals and parties of pleasure: this prince besides loved him because he was a facetious and merry man.

ner, where she had eaten of the greatest delicacies, and all prepared to her taste, had an inclination to hear the evening service at St Anthony's the less: she was there seized with fainting fits, which obliged her to be carried back immediately to Zamet's. As soon as she arrived she went into the garden and was immediately attacked with an apoplectic fit, which it was expected would have instantly stifled her. She recovered a little, through the assistance they gave her; and strongly possessed with a notion that she was poisoned*, commanded them to carry her from that house to madam de Sourdis her aunt, who lived in the cloister Saint-Germain.

Scarce had they time to put her in bed when thick succeeding convulsions, so dreadful as amazed all that were present, and in a word all the symptoms of approaching death, left Varenne, who had taken up the pen to write the king word of the accident that had happened, nothing else to say but that the physicians all despaired of his mistress's life, by the nature of her distemper, which required the most violent remedies, and the circumstance of her being far gone with child, which made all applications mortal†. Scarce had he sent away the letter when madam de Beaufort drawing near her last moments, was seized with new convulsions which turned her black, and disfigured her so horribly that La Varenne, not doubting but the king, upon the receipt of his letter, would set out immediately to see his

* D'Aubigné gives us to understand this, when he says, that after she had refreshed herself with Zamet, by eating a large citron, or, according to others, a sallad, "she immediately felt such an inflammation in her throat, and such violent twitchings in her stomach, that, &c." But neither De Thou, Bassompierre, Le Septenaire, nor any other historian, imputes her disorder to poison. Le Grain ascribes it to the crude and cold juice of the citron, Sauval

says, that he knew some old men who remembered to have seen the duchess lie in state in the nunnery of Saint Germain.

† "The physician La Riviere, came in great haste upon this occasion, says D'Aubigné, with others of the king's physicians, and entering but three steps into her chamber, when he saw the extraordinary condition she was in, went away saying to his brother physicians, This is the hand of God." Tom. III. liv. v. c. 3.

1599. mistress, thought it better to send him word in a second billet that she was dead, than to expose him to a spectacle at once so dreadful and afflicting as that of a woman whom he tenderly loved, expiring in agitations, struggles, and agonies, that left hardly any thing of human in her figure.

La Varenne, in the letter he sent me by the same courier, informed me that the duchess was not dead, but by what he could judge had not an hour to live*; in effect she expired a few moments after, in a general subversion of all the functions of nature capable of inspiring horror and dismay. The king, who upon the receipt of La Varenne's first letter, had not failed to mount his horse immediately, received the second when he was got half way to Paris, and listening to nothing but the excess of his passion, was resolved, notwithstanding all that could be said to him, to give himself the consolation of seeing his mistress † once more, dead as he believed her to be. The

* Saturday morning, the convulsions had writhed her mouth to the back of her neck. Her body was opened, in which a dead child was found. See concerning this death, M. de Thou. liv. cxxii. Matthieu, *ibid.* Le Grain, liv. vii. Le Septennaire, ann. 1599. Mem. de Bassompierre. De Thou, Matthieu, and Bassompierre, place her death a day sooner.

† According to Bassompierre, who speaks of it as being an eyewitness, Henry did not believe that his mistress was yet dead. He says that La Varenne having come to acquaint the marechal d'Ornano and him, who had accompanied the duchess to Paris, that she was just dead, they both took horse in order to bring the melancholy news to the king and keep him from coming to Paris. "We found," says he, "the king on the other side of La Saussaye, near Ville-juif, coming on post horses with all expedition. As soon as he saw the marechal, he suspected that he came to bring him the

news, which as soon as he heard he made great lamentation for her. At length they prevailed with him to go into the abbey La Saussaye, where they laid him upon a bed: when at last a coach coming from Paris, they put him into it, in order to return to Fontainebleau." Mem. de Bassompierre, tom. I. p. 69. & seq. Le Grain adds, that he fainted away in his coach between the arms of the grand ecuyer or master of the horse.

Without attempting in any respect to justify the excessive fondness Henry IV. had for this woman, justice however obliges us to observe here, that this attachment was no less founded on the good qualities of her heart and mind than the beauty of her person, and that only the antipathy which is commonly borne towards such as are in the same condition, makes people say all the ill of her that we see related in these Memoirs and in the other historians. I will conclude this article with what D'Aubigné says, who is a writer that is natu-

same

same persons that had carried him back the first time to Fontainebleau, prevailed upon him by their arguments and intreaties to go back once more, and it was from this place that he dispatched the courier to me.

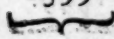
1599.

I did not lose a moment. I breakfasted at Poissy, and dined at Paris. I made use of the archbishop of Glasgow's coach to carry me as far as Essonne, from whence I took post, and at night got to Fontainebleau. I went immediately to the king, who was walking in a gallery sunk in an excess of grief that made all company insupportable: he told me that, although he expected the sight of me would at first increase his affliction, as in effect it did, yet he was sensible that in the condition, to which the loss he had suffered had reduced him, he had so much need of consolation, that he did not hesitate a moment to send for me to receive the assistance I only could give him.

With a prince equally sensible of what he owed to religious and political duties, I was not at a loss for sources from whence to derive arguments to calm his sorrow. I recalled to his remembrance some of those passages in the holy scriptures, wherein God as a father and master requires that confidence and perfect resignation, the effect of which is to inspire a Chri-

rally more inclined to blame than to commend. "It is a wonder," says he, "how this woman, whose great beauty had nothing of the loose turn in it, could have lived rather like a queen than a mistress for so many years, and that with so few enemies. The necessities of state were the only enemies she had to encounter." He had said before, that she used with great moderation her power over the king: and P. Matthieu adds, to the good qualities which he remarks in this lady, that of having often given very good counsel to Henry IV. *ibid.* "She would not suffer any other person near her," says Le Grain also, *liv.*

viii. "though the *sieur de Liancourt* was a man of great merit and of a very honourable family: infomuch that this marriage was dissolved before it was consummated." Some accounts of that time speak of *Nicholas d'Amerval*, *sieur de Liancourt*, as a person of a truly distinguished birth and of a very plentiful fortune; but whose mind, say they, was as badly formed as his body. *Mademoiselle d'Estrees* married him only to get rid of the tyrannical treatment she received from her father, and because the king promised her that he would hinder the consummation of the marriage, and even dissolve it: which he actually did.

1599.  stian with a contempt for all sublunary things; to which I added such as might incite to the acknowledgments and adoration of divine Providence as well in deep misfortunes as unexpected successes. I made no scruple to represent to Henry, that the accident which now gave him all this affliction, was among the number of those which he would one day look upon as most fortunate. I endeavoured to place him in imagination in that painful, and (if his mistress had lived) unavoidable situation, when, on one side struggling with the force of a tender and violent passion, and on the other with the silent convictions of what honour and duty required of him, he would be under an absolute necessity of coming to some resolution, with regard to an engagement, which he could not break without torture, or preserve without infamy. Heaven, I told him, came to his assistance by a stroke painful indeed, but which could only open the way to a marriage, upon which depended the tranquility of France, the happiness of his people, the fate of Europe, and his own good, to whom the blessing of a lawful union would always appear too dearly purchased, by the desertion of a woman, who, by a thousand good qualities, was worthy of his affection.

I easily perceived that this last argument, enforced in a manner advantageous to his mistress, made an impression upon Henry's heart, by the soothing pleasure it gave him to hear his choice approved of. He confessed to me, that it was some relief to him to find me placing his attachment for the duchess of Beaufort among the number of those that are formed by a real sympathy of minds, and not on mere libertinism; and that he had been apprehensive I would have no otherways endeavoured to comfort him, than by rendering him ashamed of his passion for her. This first conversation was very long. I do not remember every thing I said to the king. All I know is that, after having first applied those gentle soothing things that affliction demands, the continuance
of

of which I opposed by arguments drawn from the necessity all princes and persons in any public character are under, of preserving, even in the most reasonable sorrows, that freedom of mind requisite for affairs of state; Henry had not the weakness of resigning himself up to grief through obstinacy*, or of seeking a cure in insensibility. He listened more to the dictates of his reason than his passion, and already appeared much less afflicted to those persons who entered his chamber. At length every one being careful not to renew his grief, which his daily employments gradually diminished, he found himself in that state in which all wise men ought to be who have had great subjects of affliction, that is, neither condemning, nor flattering the cause, nor affecting either to recall or banish the remembrance of it.

Joyeuse likewise employed the public attention, having from a soldier and a courtier † become a capuchin, and afterwards from a capuchin become again a soldier and a courtier, he resumed his inclination for the frock, which it was pretended the pope had only during the war granted him a dispensation for quitting; and this time he wore it till his death.

* Henry IV. made all the court go into mourning for the death of the duchess of Beaufort. He himself was dressed in black for the first eight days, and afterwards in violet. Mem. de Chiverny.

† Henry de Joyeuse, count de Bouchage, and youngest brother to the duke de Joyeuse, was slain at Coutras. "One day at four in the morning as he was passing thro' the streets of Paris near the convent of the capuchins, after he had spent the night in a debauch, he imagined that he heard angels singing the matins in the convent: at which being much affected, he immediately turned capuchin under the name of Fre-
re-Ange. Afterwards he quitted

" the frock and carried arms against Henry IV. at which time the duke de Maine made him governor of Languedoc, a duke, peer, and marechal of France. At last he made his peace with the king: but one day this prince being with him on a balcony, under which was a great number of people assembled together, Cousin, says Henry IV. to him, this multitude seem to me to be very contented and easy at seeing together an apostate and a renegado. This saying of the king's made such an impression on Joyeuse that he entered again into his convent, where he died." This anecdote is taken from the notes on the Henriade.

1599. The marriage of his daughter*, the sole heiress of the family of Joyeuse, with the duke of Montpensier, was the last action of his public life. The marchioness de Bellisle†, after his example, took the habit of a nun, of the order of Saint Barnard.

* Henrietta Catherine de Joyeuse. There did not survive of this marriage but one daughter, whereby the branch of Bourbon Montpensier became extinct.

† Antonietta d'Orleans-de-Longueville was the widow of Charles de Gondy marquis of Bellisle, and eldest son of the marshal de Retz. Mezeray informs us that the reason of her retiring, was the mortification she had received by not being able to revenge the death of her

husband; a soldier whom she had employed for this purpose having been taken and hanged; for she could not obtain his pardon of the king. The marquis de Bellisle had been killed in 1596 at Mount-Saint-Michel, by a gentleman of Bretagne, called Kermartin. L'Etoile speaks of her as a woman who was much admired by all the court on account of her beauty and understanding, and as an eminent example of devotion and penitence in her convent,

M E M O I R S

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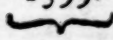
S U L L Y.

B O O K XI.

THE time settled for the agreement about ^{1599.} the marquifate of Saluces, of which the terms were referred to the pope, had elapsed without any decision by his holiness, because the duke of Savoy, who knew better than any other person that it could not be favourable for him, had, to * elude the sentence, made use of all those arts that were generally practised in this little court, whose policy it was, when its safety or advantage was in question, to employ cunning, treachery, submission, and the appearance of the strongest attachments. The first thought that presented itself to the duke of Savoy's mind was, to revoke an agreement which had only been made to gain time, or with a hope that France would embroil itself with the holy see: but as this proceeding seemed too disingenuous, he had recourse to another artifice to make the pope voluntarily resign the arbitration: he apprised his ambassador at Rome, that he had certain intelligence from France and Italy that Clement VIII. had suf-

* This marquifate was a transferrable fief of Dauphiné, to which the house of Savoy had no right.

ferred

1599.  fered himself to be gained by the king, on a private condition, that his most christian majesty should engage to yield afterwards to the pope himself all his claims upon the marquisate of Saluces. The ambassador, who was first imposed upon by his master, explained himself in such a manner upon this collusion, that his holiness, who had only accepted of the arbitration for the advantage of both parties, resigned it with indignation.

The duke of Savoy, who had not doubted but that the pope would act in this manner, gave the king, however, to understand, that he would rely entirely upon him, without having recourse to any foreign arbitration upon the dispute. He thought, by piquing this prince upon his honour, to obtain that which was the subject of their contest, which he took care to have represented to him, as a thing of such small value, that it could not merit the attention of so great a king. And it was with these instructions that the sieurs de Jacob, de La-Rochette, de Lullins, de Bretons, and de Roncas, the duke of Savoy's agents, came to Paris.

With views of this nature the minister and the confident of the prince is commonly the person whom they begin to engage in their interest, or (to be plainer) whom they endeavour to corrupt; and if he should not appear very virtuous, do not even conceal from him the design with which they come, and in their discourse make no longer any use of that caution which is observed in a congress. These gentlemen therefore told me, that their master did not pretend to hold the marquisate of Saluces of his majesty any otherwise than as a meer gift of his munificence; and at the same time insinuated to me plainly enough, that this present would produce from the duke of Savoy advantages for me proportionable to the importance of the request, and my solicitude to secure its success. I would not seem to understand these last words; and with regard to the first, I told the agents drily, that since, as they well knew,

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no one could bestow upon another what was not immediately in his own possession, it was necessary the duke of Savoy should first begin by resigning all claim to the marquisate of Saluces; and that then his majesty, who I assured them had no less greatness of mind than his highness, would use his power royally. And I very earnestly intreated them to address themselves directly to the king: which they did, discouraged with the manner I spoke to them. Henry treated them with great civility, but appeared so resolute upon every thing that regarded that state, that after several useless attempts, they laid aside all thoughts of succeeding this way.

Finding all France, and the court itself, filled with malecontents and mutinous persons, they imagined that by pushing them on to some violent resolution, they might give Henry sufficient employment within his kingdom, to make him lose sight of all that passed without. The duke of Savoy's presence appeared to them absolutely necessary to engage more closely those lords who listened to their suggestions, and they wrote to him, that his interest required that he should take a journey to Paris. This project was perfectly suited to the duke's character*: he consented to it, and ordered them to demand his majesty's leave for that purpose; which the king would have denied, if he could have done it with any appearance of reason. But the duke of Savoy had deprived him of the least pretence, by protesting, that he undertook this journey, in order that he might himself treat with his majesty; or rather, that he came to submit entirely to the king's will. This declaration he accompanied with so many complaints against Spain, that he seemed to be upon the point of coming to an open rupture with that crown; and that henceforward he would place all his hopes of security on an union with France. He had a short

* It is said, that this prince, during his residence at the court of France, one day let fall the following words, "I am not come into this kingdom to reap, but to sow."

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time before refused an advantageous proposal made him by the king of Spain, to send his son and his eldest daughter to the court of Madrid, to appear there as princes of the blood-royal of Spain.

By this step of the duke of Savoy, the pope was fully determined to concern himself no further with the affair of Saluces: but nothing could make the king neglect two things, which from the very first appeared to him absolutely necessary; namely, to give up no part of that satisfaction which was due to him by the duke, and to discover all his transactions with the malecontents of his court.

Among these the king always gave marechal Biron the first rank. His majesty knew, that during the stay this marechal made in Guienne, he had solicited the nobility of that province to engage in his interests; and that at his own table he had had such conversations with them, as proved him to be an enemy to the royal authority. All this might have been attributed to the pride and insolence of his disposition; but what gave most weight to this behaviour was, that his intrigues at the court of Savoy, although carried on with all possible caution, came at the same time to his majesty's knowledge. And the journey the king took this year to Blois, had in reality no other motive than to disconcert the projects of Biron, and to retain the people in their duty; but in public, the king talked of it as a party of pleasure, to pass the summer in that agreeable climate, and to eat, he said, some of the excellent melons there. His removal from Paris likewise, in the state things then were, was a matter of indifference.

I attended his majesty, whose stay at Blois produced nothing of consequence enough to be mentioned: he passed his time there in the employment I have already mentioned, and in endeavouring to procure the so earnestly desired dissolution of his marriage with Margaret of Valois. As long as the duchess of Beaufort lived, no one was solicitous to press Henry to a divorce, either because they apprehended

hended that their endeavours would turn to the advantage of his mistress, who was universally hated, or that they did not care to expose themselves to the rage of this woman; who was always to be feared, even though her designs should not succeed: but as soon as she was dead, there was a general combination of the parliament, all the other bodies, and the people, to solicit him on this subject. The procurer-general came to his majesty, and intreated him to give his subjects this satisfaction. The king, though he was not determined upon his choice, promised, however, to yield to the desires of his people.

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I now resumed my correspondence with queen Margaret with more ardour than before: I had taken no pains to remove the obstacle which this princess made, on madam de Beaufort's account, to the consent that was required of her; for I looked upon it as a resource to which, probably, every one must have applied; and it was this only that could have restrained the court of Rome, if the king had suffered himself at last to be gained by his mistress: besides, the compliance I observed in Margaret assured me that she did not make it a pretence for an absolute refusal. I was confirmed in this opinion by the answer she wrote me from Usson, to a letter I had just sent her, in which I mentioned the sacrifice that was expected from her, in very respectful but in very clear terms, as such negotiations require. Margaret, on her side, to shew that she perfectly understood what was to be done, explained herself absolutely upon the bill of divorce, annexing to it such reasonable conditions as took away all difficulty for the future; she only desired a decent pension might be assigned her, and that her debts might be paid; appointing a man to conclude this affair, either with the king, or with me, who, though firmly attached to her, could not be suspected: this was Langlois, who had served his majesty so faithfully in the reduction of the city of Paris, and had been rewarded for it with the post of master of the requests.

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quests. It was not easy to find a man who was more capable of business: he brought his majesty an answer from Margaret*; for the king thought he likewise was under a necessity of writing to her, which he did with equal goodness and complaisance, but in terms far less explicit than I had done. With the letters, Langlois brought a state of this princess's demands, which were immediately granted. To render the thing more firm, Langlois undertook to make her write to the pope in terms that gave his holiness to understand, that she was far from being constrained to this act; that she had the same sollicitude for the conclusion of this affair as all France had. D'Ossat, provided with a writing of the same kind, found no more obstacles: he was seconded by Sillery, who endeavoured to efface the scandal of his first commission. The holy father used no more delays in granting the favour that was demanded of him, than what decency and ceremony required; and did not suffer himself to be influenced by suggestions of envious persons, a detestable sort of men who are to be found in every place. He appointed the bishop of Modena, his nephew and nuncio, to put the finishing hand to this affair, which could be only done in France; associating with him two commissioners of that nation, the archbishop of † Arles, and the cardinal de Joyeuse: the course they were to take, was to declare the parties free from all engagements, by the nullity of their marriage.

* See these two letters of Henry IV. to Margaret de Valois, and of Margaret's to Henry, in the New collection des lettres du Henry le Grand.

† Horace del Monte, the archbishop of Arles, and Francis de Joyeuse, the second son of William de Joyeuse. These three commissioners having met in the palace of Henry de Gondy, bishop of Paris, after maturely examining the reasons alledged on both sides, declared the marriage void, by reason

of consanguinity, different religion, spiritual affinity, compulsion, and for want of the consent of one of the parties: for Henry IV. and Margaret de Valois were related in the third degree; the mother of Jane d'Albert, who also was called Margaret, being the sister of Francis I. See the history and pièces concerning this divorce in Matthieu, tom. II. b. ii. De Thou, liv. cxxiii. La Chronologie Septennaire, ann. 1599.

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While this affair was hastening towards a conclusion, Henry returned to Fontainebleau; and giving great part of his time to diversions, and the pleasures of the table, heard mademoiselle d'Entragues* often mentioned. The courtiers, eager to flatter his inclination for the fair, spoke so advantageously of the beauty, wit, and sprightliness of this young lady, that the king had a desire to see her, and became immediately passionately enamoured of her. Who could have foreseen the uneasiness this new passion was to give him! but it was Henry's fate, that the same weakness which obscured his glory, should likewise destroy the tranquillity of his life.

The lady was no novice: although sensible of the pleasure of being beloved by a great king, yet ambition was her predominant passion; and she flattered herself she might make so good use of her charms, as to oblige her lover to become her husband. She did not therefore seem in haste to yield to his desires; pride, chastity, and interest, were employed in their turns; she demanded no less than one hundred thousand crowns for the price of her favours. And perceiving that she had only increased Henry's passion, by an obstacle, in my opinion, much more likely to cool it, since his majesty was obliged to tear this sum from me by violence, she no longer despaired of any thing, and had recourse to other artifices; she alleged the restraint her relations † kept her in, and

* Catherine Henrietta, daughter to Francis de Balzac, lord of Entragues, Marcouilly, and de Malesherbes, by Mary Touchet, mistress to Charles IX. whom he married for his second wife. The writings of those times represent her as not so beautiful, though younger, than the fair Gabrielle, and still more gay, ambitious, and enterprising. This sketch, which corresponds with what the duke de Sully says here, will be very much confirmed in the sequel of these Memoirs.

† This fear was not entirely without foundation. If we may

believe the marechal de Bassompierre, in his Memoirs, her mother was indeed very condescending in this affair; and it was even she that drew the king to Malesherbes, a house where she lived: but her father was not so complying, any more than the count d'Auvergne, half-brother by the mother to the lady. They wanted to pick a quarrel with the count de Lude, whom Henry IV. employed upon this occasion; and they carried the lady to Marcouilly, where the king nevertheless went to see her. Tom. I.

1599. the fear of their resentment. The prince endeavoured to remove all these scruples, but could not satisfy the lady, who taking a favourable opportunity, at length declared, that she would never grant him any thing, unless he would give her a promise, under his hand, to marry her in a year's time. It was not upon her own account, she said (accompanying this strange request with an air of modesty, with which she well knew how to enflame the king) that she asked for this promise, to her a verbal one had been sufficient, or, indeed, she would have required none of any kind, being sensible that her birth did not allow her to pretend to that honour, but that she would have occasion for such a writing, to serve as an excuse for her fault to her relations; and observing that the king still hesitated, she had the address to hint, that in reality she should look upon this promise as of very little consequence, knowing well the king was not to be summoned to a court of justice like one of his common subjects.

What a striking example of the tyranny of love! Henry was not so dull but that he plainly perceived this girl endeavoured to deceive him: not to mention likewise those reasons he had to believe her far from being a vestal, or those intrigues against the state of which her father, mother, her brother, and even herself, had been convicted, and had drawn upon this family an order to leave Paris, which I had so lately signified to them from his majesty; notwithstanding all this, the king was weak enough to comply with his mistress's desires, and promised to grant her request.

One morning, when he was preparing to go to the chace, he called me into the gallery at Fontainebleau, and put this shameful paper into my hands. It is a piece of justice, which I am so much the more obliged to do Henry, as the reader must perceive that I do not endeavour to palliate his faults, to acknowledge that, in the greatest excesses to which he was hurried by his passions, he always submitted

to

to a candid confession of them, and to consult with those persons whom he knew were most likely to oppose his designs. This is an instance of rectitude and greatness of soul, rarely to be found amongst princes. While I was reading this paper, every word of which was like the stab of a poignard, Henry sometimes turned aside to conceal his confusion, and sometimes endeavoured to gain over his confidant by condemning and excusing himself by turns; but my thoughts were wholly employed upon the fatal writing. The clause of marrying a mistress, provided she bore him a son in the space of a year (for it was conceived in these terms) appeared indeed ridiculous, and plainly of no effect; but nothing could relieve my anxiety, on account of the shame and contempt the king must necessarily incur, by a promise which, sooner or later, would infallibly make a dreadful confusion. I was also afraid of the consequences of such a step in the present conjuncture whilst the divorce was depending; and this thought rendered me silent and motionless.

Henry, seeing that I returned him the paper coldly, but with a visible agitation of mind, said to me, "Come, come, speak freely, and do not assume all this reserve." I could not immediately find words to express my thoughts, nor need I here assign reasons for my perplexity, which may be easily imagined by those who know what it is to be the confidant of a king, on occasions when there is a necessity of combating his resolution, which is always absolute and unalterable. The king again assured me; that I might say and do what I pleased without offending him; which was but a just amends, he said, for having forced from me three hundred thousand livres. I obliged him to repeat this assurance several times, and even to seal it with a kind of oath; and then no longer hesitating to discover my opinion, I took the paper out of the king's hands and tore it to pieces, without saying a word. "How!" said Henry, astonished at the boldness of this action.

1599.

"*Morbieu!* what do you mean to do? I think you are mad." I am mad, I acknowledge, fire, replied I, and would to God I was the only madman in France. My resolution was taken, and I was prepared to suffer every thing rather than, by a pernicious deference and respect, to betray my duty and veracity; therefore, notwithstanding the rage I saw that instant impressed on the king's countenance, while he collected together out of my hands the torn pieces of the writing, to serve as a model for another, I took advantage of that interval to represent to him, in a forcible manner, all that the subject may be imagined to suggest to me. The king, angry as he was, listened till I had done speaking, but, overcome by his passion, nothing was capable of altering his resolution; the only effort he made was not to banish from his presence a confidant too sincere. He went out of the gallery without saying a single word to me, and returned to his closet, whither he ordered Lomenie to bring him a standish and paper; he came out again in half a quarter of an hour, which he had employed in writing a new promise. I was at the foot of the staircase when he descended; he passed by without seeming to see me, and went to Malesherbes to hunt, where he staid two days.

I was of opinion that this incident ought to put no stop to the affair of the divorce, nor hinder another wife from being sought for for the king, but rather that it should hasten both: his majesty's agents at Rome made therefore the first overture of a marriage between Henry and the princess Mary of Medicis*, daughter to the grand duke of Florence. The king suffered us to proceed in this business, and, by the force of repeated importunities, even

* Mary de Medicis, daughter to Francis grand duke of Tuscany, by the arch-duchess Jane of Austria, daughter to the emperor Ferdinand. She had for her portion six hundred thousand crowns, besides rings

and jewels. *La Chronologie Septennaire*, anno 1600, p. 121. and *Matthieu*, tom. II. liv. ii. p. 336, give an account of the negotiations of d'Ossat and de Sillery, relating to this marriage.

appointed the constable, the chancellor, Villeroi, and I, to treat with the person whom the grand duke should send to Paris. We were resolved not to let the affair sleep. Joannini, the person deputed by the grand duke, was no sooner arrived, than the articles were instantly drawn and signed by us all.

1599.

I was pitched upon to communicate this news to the king, who did not expect the business would have been concluded so suddenly. As soon as I replied to his question from whence I came, "We come, sire, from marrying you," this prince remained a quarter of an hour as if he had been struck with a thunderbolt. He afterwards walked up and down his chamber hastily, delivering himself up to reflections, with which his mind was so violently agitated, that for a long time he could not utter a word. I did not doubt but that all I had represented to him had now a proper effect: At length recovering himself like a man who had taken his resolution, "Well?" said he, rubbing his hands together, "well, *depart dieu*! be it so, there is no remedy: if for the good of my kingdom I must marry, I must." He acknowledged to me, that the fear of succeeding no better in his second than his first marriage was the cause of his irresolution. Strange caprice of the human mind! A prince who had extricated himself with glory and success from a thousand cruel dissensions, which war and policy had occasioned, trembled at the very thoughts of domestic quarrels, and seemed more troubled than when, that very year, upon notice sent from a capuchin of Milan*, an Italian, who had come to Paris with an intention to poignard him, was seized in the midst of the court. The marriage, though concluded on, was not solemnized till the following year,

* His name was Frere Honorio. Henry IV. thanked him himself for it, and caused several advantageous offers to be made him by his ambassador at Rome, Matthieu, tom. II. liv. ii. p. 302.

1599.

Other foreign affairs in this, which remain to be mentioned, are these; the war in the Low Countries, which was vigorously begun when the archduke went into those provinces; the king, upon reiterated complaints from Spain, forbade his subjects to bear arms in the service of the States, but this was merely for form's sake, policy not permitting him to suffer the Flemish to be oppressed, His majesty not only forbore to punish those who disobeyed these orders, but likewise assisted that people privately: the war in Hungary, which I shall say nothing of, except that the duke of Mercœur asked and obtained leave to serve in the troops of the emperor Rodolph; the revolution that happened in Sweden, where the then reigning king and elected one of Poland * was dethroned by his subjects, who put his uncle Charles duke of Sudermania in his place; and lost all hope of ever being restored by the defeat he received from his rival.

With respect to my own personal affairs, this was the most considerable. This year the princess d'Epinoi † came to me when I was at Blois, to engage my interest with the king against the princes of Ligne, who had attempted to usurp her estate, and that of her children. These children were five in number, four of whom, three sons and her eldest daughter, she had brought with her; the youngest was educated under the care of madam de Roubais, widow of the viscount de Gand, her uncle and mine. The princess told me, that the nearest relation by the father's side which her children had in France being myself, it was fit I should be their guardian. I accepted willingly of this trust, to procure them

* Sigismund. This misfortune befel him for attempting to re-establish the catholic religion in Sweden. See, with regard to all these foreign affairs, De Thou, le Sep-tennaire, and other historians, an. 1599.

† Hippolite de Montmorency,

widow of Peter de Melun prince d'Epinoi, died in 1594. The princess de Ligne, of whom he speaks here, is l'Amoral prince de Ligne, governor of Artois, that married Mary de Melun, who had the seignories of Roubais, d'Antoing, &c, and his brothers.

justice; and had the satisfaction at the end of seven ^{1599.} years, during which time I took the same care of these children as my own, to restore to them the possession of all their estates, which amounted to a hundred and twenty thousand livres a year. I shall have occasion hereafter, to take notice of the obligations they received from his majesty.

About the same time the merchants of Tours came to intreat my assistance in procuring leave for them to establish manufactures of silks, and of gold and silver stuffs, which had not yet been made in France, together with a prohibition for importing any from foreign countries for the future, assuring me that they had sufficient for to supply the whole kingdom. Before I gave them their answer, I required time to examine if their report was true; and being convinced it was not, I endeavoured to dissuade them from an enterprise which could not miscarry with impunity: I could not prevail. Upon my refusal they addressed themselves directly to his majesty. I thought it necessary not to oppose an establishment, which, if well conducted, might be of great use. The king, overcome by their importunity, granted all they asked; but six months were scarce passed, when, for want of having taken proper measures, they came to get their commissions revoked, which had given general discontent, on account of the inconveniency and increase of expence to the purchasers, which had been produced by this new regulation*.

* The murmurings of the bankers and the public farmers of the revenue, whose profits the new prohibition had considerably diminished, likewise contributed not a little to its revocation. *Chronologie Septennaire*, p. 94. an. 1599. The case is the same with regard to these stuffs as all the other parts of traffic. The freedom of trade which should subsist between all the nations of the world, will not give us, in this respect, any advantage over our neighbours, farther than we can

find out the methods of manufacturing these stuffs ourselves of a more beautiful, finer, or cheaper fabric. At this very day a great number of foreigners take them off our hands, and the prohibition is in force only as to Indian stuffs and printed linens; but it were to be wished that we would be more careful to forbear the use of the latter, or rather make in France such stuffs as would serve instead of these which are so commodious and serviceable.

1599.

The king believing the affair of the marquifate of Saluces would not be finished without striking a blow for it, had, for some time, thought of getting a man to perform the duties of grand master of the ordnance, who was capable of acquitting himself well of them, and above all of acting by himself; this good old d'Estrées was not able to do: however, his majesty would not take away the post from him for his children's sake, of whom monsieur d'Estrées was the grandfather; but the expedient he hit upon was, that the elder de Born being desirous of resigning the post of lieutenant general of the ordnance, I might treat with him for it, and unite the duties of that employment to those of the grand master of the ordnance, although I was not invested with this last. He even offered, in my favour, to augment the privileges of the first, already very considerable, by raising it into an office, giving it authority over all the lieutenant-generals in the provinces, augmenting the salary, and lastly by granting the patents gratis. However, I must acknowledge, that I was not to be won by these offers, and could not resolve to serve under another, after having been disappointed of the first place: I therefore excused myself, upon the business I was already charged with, from not complying with the king's intentions. The king was not to be imposed upon by this answer, and, after many sollicitations which I knew how to defend myself against, he left me in anger, telling me that he would mention it to me no more, but, that since I would listen to nothing but my own caprice, he would take his own away.

His kindness for me made him that moment forget his threat. He caused a proposal to be made to monsieur de Estrées to resign his employment, which, as soon as I was informed of, I offered, by monsieur and madam du Pêche, three thousand crowns to madam de Nery, who governed the old man entirely, to procure his consent; the master of
the

the ordnance being importuned by this woman, told the king that he was willing to accept of an equivalent for his post. The king immediately acquainted me with his resolution, adding, that he required nothing of me for the offence I had given him, but to put his artillery into a condition to obtain the marquisate of Saluces for him, which, he was every day more convinced, would not be yielded without force, that is to say, without a great number of very difficult sieges; for that is the usual way of carrying on a war in Savoy. I thanked his majesty, and agreed with d'Estrées for eighty thousand crowns; all these petty claims arising to a considerable sum more, I was, on this occasion, obliged to take up rents to the value of a hundred thousand crowns from Morand, Vienne, and Villemontée; and three days afterwards I was solemnly invested with the dignity * of grand master of the ordnance, and took the usual oath for it. This was the fourth great office with which I was then honoured; the annual produce of it was twenty four thousand livres. I thought myself obliged, in gratitude to his majesty for this last instance of his bounty, to give all my cares to the artillery. I visited the arsenal, where every thing seemed to me in such a miserable condition, that I resolved to take up my residence there, that I might apply myself wholly towards its re-establishment, although this castle was then very ill built, and destitute of every conveniency.

* The king declared it an office of the crown, and that in favour of M. de Sully. Brantome, in the place where he gives us the list of the grand masters of the ordnance, speaks thus, "Since M. de Rosny has had this charge of grand master, who undoubtedly does the place so much honour, the arsenal is in very good order, owing to his great capacity and application, especially as

"the importance of the thing itself and his own good sense would have it so. Witness what he performed in the last war with Savoy, where, in a short time, he gave proof of very quick dispatch and diligence, by being sooner in the field than he was expected." *Vies des hommes illustres, art. M. Rosny, tom. I, p. 227, 228.*

1599.

The affairs of the artillery were still worse. I began by a reform of the officers of this body, who, not having the slightest notion of their trade, were, in fact, only the servants of the officers of the court of justice. I cashiered about five hundred of them at one stroke. I conferred next with the commissaries for saltpetre, and agreed with them for a considerable provision of powder, which I shewed to the king. I treated likewise with the masters of great iron-works, for iron to make carriages and bombs; with foreign merchants for the metal; and with cart-wrights and carpenters, for the wood-work necessary for the designs I had formed. His majesty came to visit his arsenal himself, fifteen days after I was settled there; and these visits became afterwards one of his chief amusements: he took pleasure in seeing all the preparations that were making there, and the extreme diligence with which I applied myself to them.

That diligence indeed was no more than necessary in the present posture of affairs in Savoy, the detail of which, and that of the war they produced, will make up the subject of these Memoirs for all the following year. It was at the end of this, that the duke of Savoy left his own dominions to come into France with those intentions I have already mentioned, but they were too well known to produce the effects he had promised himself from his artifices. The reflections which the past conduct of this prince, together with that of his agents, and a knowledge of his character gave rise to, were far from being favourable to him. There was likewise something still more positive against him: Lefdiguières had sent advice to his majesty, that the duke was fortifying his castles and towns with great care, especially those of Bresse, and furnishing them with ammunition and provisions. It was known, by means of the count de Carces and the sieur du Passage, that he had strongly solicited the court of Madrid, and pressed the pope, to procure a second

reference of the affair; representing to him, that it was the interest of all Italy not to suffer that his most christian majesty should possess any thing beyond the Alps. The French residents at Florence sent advice, that the duke's purpose, by coming into France, was to circumvent the king; who, on his side, was persuaded, that it was M. de Savoy himself who would be the dupe, not only of him, but of the king of Spain and other princes of Italy; for these last were at no pains to conceal their dislike of the duke of Savoy's ambitious and restless spirit: and the king of Spain had not forgot the public complaints he made, that while they gave the Low Countries and Franche Compté, of more value than the two Castiles and Portugal, as a portion for one of their infantas, the other, whom he had married, had nothing but a crucifix and an image of the Virgin Mary. Many other indecent sallies of the like nature, followed by reciprocal complaints, had absolutely ruined their former good correspondence.

The event proved the justness of those observations which the letter the king shewed me from Lesdiguières occasioned; but in public he shewed no repentment at what he had learned of the duke's proceedings; he even ordered me to spare no expence to give him, at Lyons, such a reception as is due to foreign sovereigns. This prince, I believe, had no cause to complain of me upon this account: but messieurs the counts of Saint John* did not act in the same manner; they denied him certain honours which the dukes of Savoy claimed in the assembly of canons as counts of Villars. It was at Fontainebleau and at Paris where the shew was

* It was by order of the king, according to F. Matthieu, vol. II. b. ii. p. 323. that the canons of Lyons refused the duke of Savoy the place of honorary canon in their cathedral, which they had granted to the former duke his father, and that for a very obvious reason, the

house of Savoy having since that time lost possession of the earldom of Villars. This ceremony consisted in presenting some sacred vestments to the duke at the entrance of the cloyster, and giving him rank in the church among the canons,

1599. most magnificent. The † duke of Savoy, on his part, appeared with splendor suitable to his rank.

Three days after his arrival at Paris, the king, who was desirous of shewing him the new regulations in the arsenal, sent me notice that he would come and sup there with the duke and chief lords and ladies of his court. The duke of Savoy came so long before, that I could not impute such extraordinary haste to mere accident. He desired to see the magazines; which was not what I wanted; I was ashamed of the poverty of the old magazines, and therefore carried him into the new work-houses. Twenty cannons lately cast, and as many more in a readiness for it, forty completely mounted, and several other works which he saw carrying on with great diligence, surpris'd him so much, that he could not help asking me what I meant by all these preparations? Sir, replied I, smiling, to take Montmelian. The duke, without giving any indications that this reply had a little disconcerted him, asked with an air of gait and freedom, if I had ever been there; and upon my answering him in the negative, "Truly, I thought so, said he, or you " would not have talked of taking it; Montmelian is impregnable." I answered in the same tone, that I would not advise him to oblige the king to make the attempt, because I was very certain Montmelian would, in that case, lose the title of impregnable.

These words gave our conversation immediately a very serious turn. The duke of Savoy taking occasion to mention the affairs which brought him into France, had already, in a polite manner, begun to make me sensible that he knew I was not in his interest, when we were interrupted by the arrival

† Notwithstanding this magnificent reception, the duke of Savoy, after the first conference he had with Henry IV. became sensible that he was not likely to obtain

his demand. "I have delivered " my message, says he, and may " now go whenever I will." *Matthieu sur le Voyage de ce prince en France, tom. II. liv. ii.*

of his majesty : and afterwards nothing was thought of but pleasure. However, the same night commissioners were named for examining the occasion of the contest : the constable, the chancellor, marchal Biron, Meisse, Villeroi, and myself, were appointed for the king; and for the duke of Savoy, Belly his chancellor, the marquis de Lullin, the sieurs de Jacob, the count de Morette, the chevalier de Brétons, and des Allymes. 1600.

The duke of Savoy had already brought over the greater part of our commissioners to his interests : he gained them completely at last, by the liberal gifts which he bestowed both on them and the whole court * at the new year. But I was the person that gave him most trouble ; for every time when the question was debated amongst the commissioners, I constantly held firm to this determination, either that a restitution should be made to his majesty of the marquisate of Saluces, or that Bresse, and all the border of the Rhône from Geneva to Lyons, should be given him in exchange. But for the apparent incivility of such a proceeding, they would have solicited my exclusion from their meetings : therefore they had again recourse to an attempt to gain me, which they resolved to do at any price whatsoever.

On the 5th of January, des Allymes † came to make me the usual compliments, in the name of

* The duke sent the king two large basons and two crystal vases, as a new year's gift. " In return " of which, the king gave the duke " a crotchet of diamonds, where, " among others, was one with his " majesty's picture : it was a very " fine piece, and the duke had a " great value for it : he made presents to all who came to compliment him. *Chronologie* Septen. ann. 1600. It was said that he had gained over the duchess of Beaufort to his interest. So that if this lady had not died, it is probable the restitution of Saluces might have been dispensed with. The

duke of Savoy playing at primero with Henry, on a bett of 4000 pistoles, the king neglected his play, supposing that he had already won the game : but the duke, who had it in his own hand, contented himself with shewing the cards to the duke of Guise and D'Aubigné, who were present, and then shuffled them together. It is D'Aubigné that relates this circumstance of the duke's generosity or policy.

† René de Lucinge des Allymes, ambassador from Savoy to the court of France,

1600. his highness: he intreated me, with great politeness, to attend to his master's reasons; that is, in plain terms, to approve of them; for at the same time that he made me this request, he presented me with his highness's picture, in a box enriched with diamonds of fifteen or twenty thousand crowns value. To assist me in making a composition with my conscience, he told me, that this picture came from a daughter of France; and while he perceived me busy in admiring the brilliants, added, that it was given me by a prince whose attachment to the king was equal to his friendship for me. I still kept the picture in my hand, and asked Des Allymes what were the proposals he had to make me? He, who thought the decisive moment was now come, immediately displayed his whole stock of eloquence; and for want of good reasons, endeavoured to prove the advantage that was to be gained by the pretended rupture of his master with Spain, who offered to assist the king in conquering Naples, Milan, and the empire itself. All this cost him nothing; and to hear him, one would have thought that he had been able to dispose absolutely of these dominions; for which he added, that he did not doubt but the king would yield willingly to the duke a paltry marquisate.

I could keep silence no longer. I told Des Allymes, that if the king demanded the marquisate of Saluces to be restored to him, it was not on account of its value, since that was very inconsiderable; but that he could not in honour suffer the crown to be dismembered of one of its ancient domains, and which had been usurped at a time when the duke of Savoy, having received the highest obligations from Henry III. at his return from Poland, ought in gratitude to have abstained from it. I thanked the deputy for his obliging expressions in my favour; and to pay his compliments with others, assured him, that when the duke of Savoy had made an absolute restitution of Saluces, I would
not

not forget to use my interest with his majesty, to 1600.
engage him to procure those opulent kingdoms for the duke which he had offered to the king, and which would be much more convenient for him than his majesty. Saying this, I opened the box, and after praising the workmanship and the materials, I told Des Allymes, that the great value of the present was the only reason which hindered me from accepting it; but that if he would allow me to return the box and the diamonds, I would keep the picture with great pleasure, in remembrance of a prince so obliging. Accordingly, I separated the box and diamonds from the picture; when Des Allymes telling me, that it did not belong to him to make any alterations in his master's presents, I intreated him to take back all together, and he left me in despair of ever being able to engage me in his master's interest, and appeared but little satisfied with my behaviour.

All that remained now to be done was to exclude me from their meetings. Upon his majesty's refusing to gratify them in this request, the duke of Savoy took it in his head to desire, that the patriarch* of Constantinople might assist at these meetings in the name of the pope; which the king agreed to, not thinking of the artifice concealed under this proposition. The next day, the king having an inclination to play at tennis, appointed the assembly to be kept at the constable's house, because he could conveniently make his party when he went from thence, after he had seen the conference begun: but before he left us, he exhorted all the commissioners to have a strict regard to justice; and whispering me in particular, "Take care of every thing, said he, and do not suffer them to impose upon you."

Upon the king's departure, I found, that instead of taking their seats they divided into parties, two

* Father Bonaventure de Calatagirone, general of the Cordeliers, and the pope's nuncio.

1600. and three together, and the nuncio sometimes conferring with one set, sometimes with another, not suffering the business to be entered upon regularly; and, above all, carefully avoiding to say any thing to me. At length Bellievre told me, that the good patriarch could not subdue his scruples about conversing with an huguenot; and intreated me, in the name of the assembly, to absent myself, since nothing could be done while I was present. I instantly comprehended the cause of this behaviour; and bowing profoundly low, withdrew, intending to go and give the king an account of what had passed. I met him in the gallery, where he had stopped to speak to Bellengreville: he asked me, with some surprize, if all was over already? and upon my acquainting him with the truth of the matter, he fell into a great rage, and ordered me to return to the commissioners, and tell them, that if there was any person amongst them to whom my presence was displeasing, it was his business to withdraw, not mine. I disturbed a little the joy of the assembly, by repeating this new order of the king's. The measures they took were, to waste the hours in seeking for expedients, till dinner-time approached; and then they deferred entering upon the question till the afternoon. But notwithstanding all their endeavours with his majesty, I continued still in the number of the commissioners, and the nuncio was obliged to vanquish his reluctance.

Bretons and Roncas turned themselves on every side, to avoid yielding to a restitution of the marquisate; they offered to do homage for it to his majesty, and if that was not sufficient, to hold Bresse upon the same conditions. I easily rendered all these proposals ineffectual, and got it unanimously declared, to give the duke of Savoy this alternative, either to resign Saluces to the king, or, in its place, the county of Bresse as far as the river of Dain, the Vicarship of Barcelonette, the valley of Sture, that of Perouse, and Pignerol; in which case,
all

all the towns and fortresses taken on both sides were to be restored *.

1600.

The duke of Savoy expected a quite different conduct from the commissioners; but the truth is, they durst not openly oppose a determination which they knew to be the king's: all the resource they had left was, to join with the courtiers in supporting the interests of the duke of Savoy; and were continually representing to the king, that he ought not to act too rigorously with a prince, whose alliance he might purchase at a very inconsiderable price, and would be much more advantageous than a fief of no value, and which would be very difficult to preserve. The alternative they offered the duke of Savoy afforded them a pretence for granting him six months to come to a resolution: he desired eighteen; and I maintained, there was no necessity for any delay. I went to his majesty to acquaint him with this resolution, which was taken in spite of me, and represented to him the great inconveniency of giving the duke of Savoy so long a time to renew his correspondences, and to prepare for war. Henry, prejudiced by the discourse of the courtiers on the necessity of granting a delay to the duke of Savoy, asked me how it was possible to do otherwise? "By granting the duke of Savoy," said I, an honourable escort of fifteen thousand foot, two thousand horse, and twenty cannon, to conduct him to Montmelian, or what other place he shall chuse to go to; and there oblige him to explain himself upon the alternative that has been proposed to him." The king did not approve of my advice; his word was given to the

* A kind of agreement was concluded upon this plan between the commissaries, which it was much suspected the duke of Savoy would not observe; because of the delays he desired: whereupon, as Le-Grain relates it, a certain person proposed to Henry, that the duke

of Savoy should be seized, and by that means obliged to perform his part of the articles. But this proposal was rejected by the king: See the particulars of the negotiation, and of the duke's residence at Paris, in M. de Thou, and Le Septennaire, an. 1599, 1600.

1600.

contrary; I was truly grieved at it; for I have been always firmly persuaded, that, but for this compliance, his majesty might have avoided a war, and have received complete satisfaction. All I could obtain was, that three months should be taken from the six that had been agreed upon.

The duke of Savoy, finding that his majesty, who was weary of the continual solicitations he had on this subject, would no longer answer otherwise than in these few words, *I am resolved to have my marquisate*, set out a little time after for Chambery, where, till the expiration of the time prescribed, which was in the month of June, he employed himself in preparations for his defence. He would have had no occasion for them, if the plot of a woman, named Nicole Mignon, had succeeded. She had undertaken to poison the king *, and thought to have engaged the count of Soissons, who, on all occasions, made known his discontent, in her design; but he conceived so great an horror at it, that he discovered her immediately: she confessed her crime, and was burnt.

Nothing remarkable happened during these three months, except the dispute between messieurs Du Perron and Du Plessis. Towards the latter end of the last year, appeared a book † of Du Plessis upon

* By procuring her husband to be admitted into the number of the king's cooks, by the interest of the count de Soissons, steward of the household. She was well known to all the princes of the blood, and to Henry himself, at St. Denis, where she kept one of the principal inns during the war. The count of Soissons, to whom she had hinted, that it would be his own fault if he was not one of the greatest princes in the world, suspecting that this woman had some bad design, caused Lomenie to conceal himself in a closet, which gave him an opportunity of discovering what

means she intended to use. She was accused of practising sorcery, but was only a profligate woman, and somewhat disordered in her senses. *Chronologie Septennaire*, anno 1600.

† This book is intitled *Instructions de la sainte eucharistie*, and attacks the mass by pretended arguments drawn from the fathers. As soon as it appeared in public, many catholic divines exclaimed against the falshood of a great number of the quotations it contained. This obliged Du Plessis to offer a kind of challenge, which those doctors prevailed upon the bishop of

the eucharist, which was looked upon, by the protestant party, to be a master-piece, and which I sent immediately to the bishop of Evreux, who was at his diocese: the difference of religion had never been able to destroy that friendship and gratitude

1600.

Evreux to accept. After several letters and steps taken on both sides to settle the method in which they were to proceed, and in which it appears that Du Plessis repented more than once of having gone so far; the king determined that there should be a public dispute between the two antagonists, wherein fifty of these passages were to be made good every day, till all the five hundred and fifty were gone through, which M. Du Perron had excepted against. They met in the council-chamber, at Fontainebleau, in the presence of the king and commissaries appointed by him: those for the catholics were the president De Thou; the advocate Pithou, and the sieur Martin, reader and physician to his majesty; for the calvinists, Fresne-Canaye, and Casaubon. They met on Thursday the 4th of May, at one o'clock in the afternoon. Of sixty-one passages which Du Perron sent to his antagonist, the latter was only prepared on nineteen of them, which he had selected from all the rest: as to these, said he to the king, I will lose my reputation or life, if one of them be found false. However, he was convicted of an unfair representation in all those that were examined: and they could only go through nine of them: the chancellor then declared the opinions of all present, upon these nine articles severally, that in the first, which was from Scotus, and the second from Durandus, Du Plessis had taken the objection for the answer; in the third and fourth from St. Chrysostom, and the fifth from Jerom, that he had omitted some of the most material words: in the sixth, that it was no where to be found in St. Cyril; on the

seventh, which was taken from the Code, that it was indeed from Crinitus, but that Crinitus had falsified the text: as to the eighth, which included two propositions from St. Bernard, that Du Plessis ought to have separated them; or at least to have put an *&c.* between: with regard to the ninth from Theodoret, that it was mutilated, and that the word idols was taken for images. This was the only conference that was held. Du Plessis Mornay, being seized with an indisposition next day, went to Saumur some days after, without taking leave of the king. Fresne-Canaye, one of the commissioners, and Saint Marie du Mont, another eminent protestant, were, soon after this dispute, in which Henry himself sometimes spoke, converted to the catholic faith. Du Plessis pretended to prove, by the authority of St. Cyril, that it was not a custom among the primitive christians to adore the cross, and yet he alleged the reproach which the emperor Julian throws on them upon this very account. "It is not very likely," returned the king, "that Julian the apostate would have reproached the christians for adoring the cross, if they had not actually done so; otherwise he would have exposed himself to be laughed at." It was the king likewise who said, that at least an *&c.* ought to have been put in the passage from St. Bernard.

A catholic having observed to a calvinist, that Du Perron had already gained several passages of Du Plessis, No matter, answered the protestant, provided that of Saumur be still left to him. Matthieu, ib. This fact, which is told in the same manner in several polemical

1600. which this prelate had always for me, nor that affection and reverence, which I had ever preserved for his merit, his abilities, and even for his quality of being my bishop: the letters we wrote to each other were always in this strain. I was greatly surprised to read in that he wrote to me on account of the book I had sent him, that the errors and falsehoods it contained were so numerous, and followed one another so close, that the whole book was justly censurable. "Not that I would accuse monsieur "Du Pleffis of insincerity," added the bishop of Evreux, with equal moderation in his adversary's regard as politeness in mine, "but I am sorry for "his misfortune in having given credit to the confused collections of compilers, who have greatly "deceived him." The remainder of his letter contained only compliments upon my late preferment to the post of grand master of the ordnance, and assurances of the pleasure it would give him "to "see me," he said, "who commanded the cannons "of France, obey the canons of the church."

I never had so good an opinion of Du Pleffis as the rest of the party had, who were all prejudiced in his favour; and I would not have chosen to have been security for the exactness of those large volumes, which he sent into the world in so quick a succession, for that on the eucharist had been preceded by a treatise upon the church. To write well, and upon these subjects especially, long reflection is necessary. This I told the bishop of Evreux in my answer, but at the same time I observed to him, that I could not believe Du Pleffis's book was, as he said, a series of errors. I told Du Perron, at the

treatises, is generally attested by all our good historians; and even those who treat the protestants most favourably. M. De Thou, liv. cxxiii. p. 843, who was himself one of the commissaries. Matthieu, *ibid.* Chron. Sept. p. 123, &c. Suppl. au Journal d'Henry IV.

tom. II. p. 51, &c. Vol. 8778, de la Bibliot. du Roi, Le Grain, and several others, who give us a relation of the whole dispute; so consequently no credit is to be given to the manner in which it is related in La Vie Du Pleffis, liv. ii. p. 269.

same

same time, that this would be the subject of a great dispute between them, for Du Plessis would not suffer his accusations to pass unanswered; this was all the serious part of my letter, the rest of it was filled with compliment, praises, and an invitation to visit my new dwelling, which do not deserve to be repeated*.

What I had foreseen happened. However, I had expected only a private not a public dispute. I would have interposed the king's authority, to have hindered the two champions from proceeding so far, but Du Plessis was the most difficult † to be persuaded, and persisted in his resolution to measure his weapons with those of the bishop of Evreux. Every one knows how the dispute was terminated. Du Plessis's defence was weak, and ended in his disgrace. The king, who would honour this challenge with his presence, gave a thousand praises to the wit and learning of Monsieur d'Evreux. "What do you think of your pope?" said Henry to me, during the debate (for Du Plessis was with the protestants what the pope is among the catholics:) "I think, sire" replied I, "that he is more a pope than your majesty imagines, for, at this moment, he gives the cardinal's hat to monsieur d'Evreux. If our religion has not a better foundation than his legs and arms crossed, I would quit it this instant."

It was upon this occasion, that his majesty, in a letter to the duke of Epemon, told him, that the diocese of Evreux had vanquished that of Saumur; that this was one of the greatest advantages, which for a long time, had been obtained for the church of God; and that such a proceeding would draw more protestants to the true church, than a course of violence for fifty years. This letter, the turn of which

* See those letters in the original, tom. II. part 1. p. 52.

† Sir, said Du Plessis to M. de Rosny, my book is my own child, which I will defend, and I intreat

you would suffer me to do so: don't you meddle with it, for you have not reared it. Matthieu, tom. II. liv. ii. p. 340.

1600. was no less singular than the choice Henry made of the duke of Epemon to address it to, made as much noise as the dispute itself, when it became public, which could not fail of happening when it was in such hands. Some said that the king wrote it to destroy the suspicions of his not being a sincere catholic, which, notwithstanding his conversion, prevailed during his whole life, and gave room to the Jesuits to mention him disadvantageously in their letters to Rome: others imagined that this letter had a meaning which was not at first perceived, and maintained, that the king had a view in it to persuade either Spain or the protestants, that all efforts to induce the council of France to take violent and sanguinary methods with them would be useless.

The six months that had been given to the duke of Savoy were now expired, yet he had taken no care to satisfy his engagement. His majesty began to think he should obtain nothing but by force; but, besides the persuasions of his courtiers, who all seemed to have sold their voices to the duke of Savoy, this prince was then retarded by an obstacle far more powerful, his fondness for his new mistress, to whom he had given the title of marchioness of Verneuil. He was no longer able to think of a separation, and (it is with some confusion that I mention it) after I had, by repeated importunities, prevailed upon him to take the rout to Lyons, he deliberated whether he should not carry her with him, to which he was farther incited by the flatterers about him*. She was now with child; and, having the promise of marriage in her possession, the affair became of great consequence to Henry. Providence once more interposed in his favour. Ma-

* She came to meet him at St. André de la Coste. Bassompierre, who was with Henry, says, that the lovers quarrelled at their first meeting, but were soon reconciled:

after which, this prince carried his mistress to Grenoble, where he continued with her seven or eight days, and afterwards to Chambery, tom. I. p. 86, &c.

dam de Verneuil was so frightened by the thunder during a storm, that she was delivered of a dead child. The king was informed of this accident at Moulins, whither he had advanced, and from whence he sent many a melancholy look to the place where he had left his mistress; but, restored to himself by his own reflections, he continued his rout to Lyons, where his troops had orders to join him.

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I intended to follow, as soon as I had settled all affairs relating to the government, and taken proper measures to secure the necessary supplies for the war, which I did not delay till the moment of execution. I had written to the receivers-general, that, according to the king's order, they were no longer to pay any bills drawn upon them, except those which were for the support of the frontier garrisons and the payment of the troops, because all others would be immediately discharged at the treasury, to which I ordered all their money to be carried directly. I likewise forbade those that paid rents, to discharge any bills without a new order, to keep them from paying, as they were accustomed, such notes as had been revoked or created without money. I raised some militia, which I chose rather to incorporate in the old corps, than to compose new regiments of. I applied myself more particularly to the affairs of the ordnance. I sent orders to the lieutenants of the ordnance of Lyonnois and Dauphiné, and to the commissioners of that of Burgundy, Provence, and Languedoc, to collect all their best pieces, and to make a great number of carriages for cannon and balls in proportion, and send them all with the powder and other ammunition to Lyons and Grenoble: and fearing, lest my orders should not be punctually executed, I went myself to Lyons, and returned in three days.

I gave the like orders in all the other provinces, and brought carriers to Paris, whom I obliged to enter into an engagement before a notary, to carry, in fifteen days, three millions three hundred thou-

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and weight to Lyons, without explaining to them what kind of merchandise it was. They were greatly astonished when they found their loading was twenty cannons, six thousand balls, and other things, belonging to the ordnance not very portable. They alledged that such heavy pieces could not be comprehended in goods of carriage; but having threatened to seize their carts and horses, and they not being willing to lose the expences they had been already at, resolved to do what was required of them: and I had the satisfaction to see all this luggage arrive safely in sixteen days at Lyons; whereas, by the ordinary methods, it could not be done in less than two or three months, and at an infinite expence.

It was always doubted whether the king would seriously renew the war, till his majesty was seen to take his rout to the Alps. The chancellor Bellièvre, who had persisted in his endeavours to dissuade him from it, finding my advice prevailed, came to me with an intention to make me approve, if possible, of the reasons he had against it. I did not regard him as one of those persons with whom to enter into an explanation would have been useless. His sincerity appeared in the manner in which he spoke to me, and the reflections with which his mind seemed to me to be agitated: the condition France was in, for which a war of any kind whatever could not but be fatal: the king's honour, which was engaged to maintain a work so solid as that of the peace of Vervins; the reproach of the infraction of that peace to which he exposed himself; the fear of bringing all the duke of Savoy's allies upon him, to oppose whom he had an army sufficiently provided with artillery indeed, but consisting only of six or seven thousand foot, and twelve or fifteen hundred horse, and (for so Bellièvre imagined) destitute of all necessary provisions. This was the sum of the chancellor's objections.

I do

1660.

I do not think that, in any passage of these Memoirs, or in the conduct of my whole life, especially since I have been called to the government of public affairs, there is any thing that can lay me under the necessity of justifying myself with regard to too great a propensity for war. Should it appear to any one that, on this occasion, I acted in contradiction to my own maxims, I answer, that, in reality, no maxim, however general it may be, can suit all cases; and supposing war to be (as I really believe it is) an evil at all times, it is also certain that it is often a necessary and even an indispensable evil, when by that only those claims can be supported, which it would be a baseness to renounce; since it must be likewise confessed, that generosity and mildness, two qualities absolutely necessary in sovereigns, yet when employed against the common rules of prudence, degenerate into weakness, and are looked upon as instances of bad conduct.

To this general reply I added the particular reasons for the present war. I shewed the chancellor, that he suffered himself to be unseasonably alarmed: the king of Spain was the only formidable ally, whom it might be apprehended would join the duke of Savoy; but it was to be considered, that the reigning king of Spain was a young man, without experience or abilities for war, sufficiently employed in reducing his own subjects, and wholly guided by a minister as little inclined to war as himself, by the natural turn of his disposition, and a desire of keeping in his own hands the money which must be consumed by a war; and lastly, that he bore no goodwill to the duke of Savoy, and was convinced, as well as all Europe, that the king demanded only a restitution of what belonged to him: that this war would appear a mere difference between the king and the duke of Savoy, or rather an effect of the intoxication of the latter, occasioned by an ill-grounded presumption, and the intrigues carried on in his favour in the council of France: and this presupposed,

1600.

posed, the success of the war depended upon its being pursued with expedition. I maintained to the chancellor, that, with four thousand men this year, the king would gain greater advantages, than with thirty thousand the next : but I did not neglect to prove to him, that his majesty was not so unprovided as he imagined, at least, that he should not want for two things, which, in the offices I held, it depended upon me to furnish him with, that is, money and artillery. Bellièvre was so far from being convinced by my arguments, that he left me with chagrin : the event will shew who had the best reasons on his side.

The duke of Savoy seeing that, contrary to his expectation, a French * army was ready to fall upon him, had recourse to his usual artifices, to prevent, at least, any act of hostility before the winter was begun. He sent deputy after deputy to his majesty at Lyons ; sometimes he appeared willing to perform the agreements, sometimes he eluded them by specious reasons, and at other times, he proposed advantageous projects for his majesty, and continued to impose upon this prince so completely, that Henry, believing he should be under no necessity to go farther than Lyons, staid there much longer than he ought to have done. While I continued with Henry in this city, I guarded him against the subtilties of the duke of Savoy ; but, as soon as I left him to return to Paris, to hasten, as I have said, the preparations for war, the king was so effectually deceived by the duke's pretended sincerity, that he wrote to me to suspend my cares, for every thing was settled in an amicable manner.

In effect, the duke of Savoy had agreed to all that was demanded of him, but this was a mere verbal agreement, and proposed that hostages should be gi-

* He was encouraged, it is said, by certain idle predictions of astrologers, who gave out that, in the month of August, there would be no king in France : a thing that proved very true, says Perefixe, for at that time he was victorious in the heart of Savoy.

1600.

ven on each side; a very proper management to delay the performance of his word, by the time that was necessarily taken up in naming those hostages, and sending them to each other. I wrote to the king very freely my opinion of this pretended accommodation, and did not scruple to disobey his orders, by forwarding the ammunition *, and came in person to Montargis, from whence I sent my baggage up the Loire, intending to ride post myself. Here it was that I received a letter from the king, which contained only these few words, "You have guessed truly: the duke of Savoy has deceived us; come to me as soon as possible, and neglect nothing that may be necessary to make him sensible of his perfidy."

I was informed more particularly of all that had passed, by a letter from Villeroi. The king had sent for Roncas, from whom he had received so little satisfaction in the explanation he demanded of him, that, resolving to press him in such a manner as to leave him no subterfuge to have recourse to, the Savoyard deputy at length betrayed himself by his equivocations, which threw the king into so great a rage, that he would hear no more, and instantly took his rout towards Chamberry; and it was from this place that the abovementioned billet was dated. His majesty imagined that this city would surrender at his approach, and that he should not be at the trouble of investing it; but in this he was mistaken.

This interval was employed by the king in soliciting his marriage with the princess Mary of Medicis; and this negotiation, which was highly pleasing to the pope, was of service to the king, in hindering his holiness from taking any part in the affairs of Savoy. D'Alincourt, whom his majesty had sent to Rome on this occasion, obtained all

* Matthieu, in the account which he gives of this expedition into Savoy, bestows, in several places, high encomiums on the duke of

Sully, and in a great measure ascribes to him the honours of that campaign. Tom. II. liv. ii. p. 352, 301, 365, &c.

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1600.

that he demanded: the marriage was concluded on, and nothing now remained but to send some person to Florence, to solemnize it by proxy. Bellegarde earnestly solicited for this honour; but all he could obtain was to be the bearer of the procuration, which was given to the duke of Florence.

While this ceremony was performing in Florence*, Henry thought it necessary to appear wholly taken up with balls, plays, and entertainments: however, that did not hinder him from laying out no less assiduously the whole plan of the campaign; he ordered Lesdiguieres to take an exact view of the castle of Montmelian; and upon his report, that with twenty pieces of cannon, and twenty thousand discharges, it might be taken, he resolved to attack it. He likewise caused that of Bourg-en-Bresse to be reconnoitred by Vienne and Castenet, who were with me; and it being their opinion that the place might be carried, it was resolved to endeavour the taking of these two cities by petard, and in the same night; and in proper time besiege the two citadels in form. Marechal Biron, to whom his majesty committed this enterprize, gave the expedition of Montmelian to Crequy, and reserved that of Bourg to himself.

The king had, without knowing it, pitched upon him, amongst all his general officers, who was the least likely to give success to the enterprize. Biron was at that time deeply engaged with the duke of Savoy. It is thought that his treaty might have been at least rough drawn or sketched out by this time. He sent word to Bouvens, the governor of Bourg, to be upon his guard, and informed him of the night and the hour when it was designed to surprise him. All this was afterwards proved. But what is singular enough, this treachery did not hinder the taking of Bourg, and on the same night that it had been resolved to attack it.

* See the whole account of it in *La Chronologie Septennaire*, an. 1600.

Bouvens communicated the advice he had received to the garrison and inhabitants of Bourg, exhorted them to defend themselves bravely, kindled great fires, doubled, nay, trebled the corps-de-guard, and, in a word, took all possible precautions on the night that he expected to be attacked, even to the standing centinel himself. Every one impatiently expected the hour mentioned in the billet, which in reality was to be that of the attack. However, it happened that marechal Biron, who was himself at the head of his troops, either to give the governor more time, or to render the enterprize impossible to be executed, or perhaps by mere chance, took a road so far about, that instead of midnight, it was break of day when he appeared before Bourg. He would then have persuaded his officers to defer till another time an attempt which at such an hour was very improper. But his opinion was so strongly opposed by Saint-Angel, Chambaret, Loustrange, Vienne, and particularly by Castenet, who had undertaken to fix the petard in open day, even though the bastions should be filled, and likewise by Boësse*, to whom his majesty had promised the government of it; that Biron, fearing lest he should incur the imputation of cowardise, and believing that the design would miscarry, was obliged to consent to it.

The affair turned out quite otherwise: the garrison and the citizens having been upon the watch till two, three, and even four o'clock, were of opinion that the enterprize was blasted, or that it was merely imaginary; and when day appeared, went to breakfast, and to refresh themselves with sleep; leaving the care of guarding the walls to some centinels, who being oppressed with sleep, acquitted themselves very ill of their charge. Castenet, with three faithful men whom I had given him, advanced as far as the counterscarp, with each a petard in his hand, followed by twelve men well armed, and of

* Peter d'Escodaca de Boësse.

1600. tried bravery: the centinel cried, "Who goes there?"
 Castenet, whom I had instructed, answered, That they were friends of the city, who were come to advertise the governor, that some troops had appeared at the distance of two thousand paces, and were gone back: he added, That he had much more to say to monsieur Bouvens from the duke of Savoy; and desired the foldier to go and inform him of it, that the gate might be opened. The centinel quitting his post to go to the governor's house, Castenet, without loss of time, advanced to the gate and fixed his petard, which carried off the draw-bridge, and made a breach, through which, the ditches not being very deep, twelve men, by the help of short ladders, entered immediately, and after them the whole army. All this was executed with such rapidity, that the city was filled in a moment with our men, and Bouvens had only time enough to retire precipitately, with his garrison, into the citadel.

The town of Montmelian* was taken in the same manner; and Chamberry, by his majesty's orders, was invested: the citizens, full of terror, thought not of defending the town, but fortified themselves in the castle, where at first they made a shew of resistance; however, they capitulated the next day, being intimidated by a battery of eight pieces of cannon, the fire of which they durst not stand. By the order his majesty caused to be observed, there was not the least violence committed. The French ladies, who followed their husbands in this expedition, settled at Chamberry; and the next day after the reduction of it, my wife gave a ball to the principal ladies of the town, where all appeared as gay as if it had not changed its master.

* Consult likewise, on all these military expeditions, De Thou, Matthieu, and La Chronologie Septen. an. 1600. in which Sully is mentioned with great honour. See likewise tom. I. des Mem. de Bassompierre.

After this, the king sent me to Lyons, to give orders for the furnishing and conveyance of the ordnance; and commanded me to visit, in this journey, the citadels of Saint-Catherine, Seissel, Pierre-Chatel, l'Ecluse, and other fortresses of Bresse, particularly the castle of Bourg: he ordered me likewise to provide a quantity of gabions, three feet in height and nine in width; upon which I answered him, that such gabions were only proper to make an enclosure for sheep newly bought up in the country. The king, on his side, in the mean time, went to possess himself of Conflans, Mionlens, Montiers, Saint-Jacome, Saint-John de Morienne, and Saint-Michael: not one of these places held out against the cannon. The taking of Mionlens restored liberty to a man who had been detained in the prisons there fifteen years: Feugeres brought him to me on account of the singularity of a prediction that had been made him, upon the duration of his captivity, and the person by whom he should be delivered; which was found to be exactly fulfilled.

I left Lyons, to execute the commission his majesty had given me*. I reached Villars by dinner-time, and Bourg in the evening, where I was received and treated with great politeness by marechal Biron. When he found that I came to take a view of the citadel, he used his utmost endeavours to dissuade me from it; representing to me, that I exposed myself to evident danger. He was certainly right: the enterprise was full of hazard; but it was because that this marechal, having failed in his attempt to hinder me from executing my design, had given the enemies (for I cannot think otherwise) such exact informations, that wherever I presented myself I found a battery against me. Notwithstanding this, I continued there night and day, till I had finished all my observations.

* In the Upper Bresse.

1600.

Biron, who probably had expected that I should pay dear for my curiosity, finding that I had escaped, laid other snares for me: on the day that I was to leave Bourg and return to Lyons, I received advice, that a party of the enemy, consisting of two hundred men, had arrived at a castle near the place where I was to lodge that night. I took notice of it to Biron, who then had none of that obliging solicitude for my safety which he had discovered before, and treated the information as a jest; which raised my suspicions. I asked him for an escort of soldiers; which he excused himself from granting, telling me, that he would commit this care to his own guards: but he privately ordered them to return, and leave me at Villars; which they did, notwithstanding my intreaties to the contrary, as soon as I alighted at Villars, and my mules were unladed. The design of this proceeding appeared now but too plain. I ordered my mules to be laden again, and travelled four leagues farther, nor stopped till I came to Vimy, where I thought myself in safety. My suspicions that Biron had undertaken to deliver me up to the duke of Savoy were changed to a certainty, when I learned that three hours after I had left Villars, the two hundred men came and stormed the house I had been at, and seemed very much concerned that they had missed their blow.

A courier from his majesty waited for me at Lyons; his business was, to get a train of artillery to force Conflans, the only one of those little towns which the king had attacked that made any resistance, and which surrendered immediately at the approach of the cannon. The king, whom I went to visit at Saint-Pierre d'Albigny, told me, that he was afraid he should not accomplish so easily his designs upon Charbonnières and the castle of Montmelian; and seemed to make some difficulty about undertaking those sieges at the approach of winter. I assured his majesty, that instead of five months (for so long he imagined the siege of Mont-

melian would last) it might be ended in so many weeks, provided that during that time the works were carried on with vigour. The king gave no credit to what I said on this head, and after I had left him said to my brother and La-Varenne, that my enemies would take advantage of my presumptuous manner of talking. However, the attention with which I had examined the weak parts of this castle, which had apparently escaped the observation of others, convinced me that I had not advanced any thing lightly. 1600.

The next day, the king taking a journey to Grenoble, left the command of the army in his absence to me. During this time, I no longer employed myself in observing Montmelian, under the cannon of which we were, but in forming the plan of the out-works, and of the disposition of those batteries with which I expected to carry the fort. I went afterwards to the king at Grenoble, who had passed his time in deliberating with his council upon this enterprize, which he had forbid me absolutely to begin in his absence. I insisted again upon the reasonableness of undertaking it; and again found the same opposition. I know not whether it was through enmity to me, or attachment to the duke of Savoy, that the count of Soissons, the duke D'Epernon, La-Guiche, and many others, appeared so unreasonable: amongst all the counsellors, only messieurs de Lesdiguieres and de Crequy were of my opinion. I laid the plan I had just finished upon the table, and went out, saying, that while they deliberated whether Montmelian should be attacked, I would go and put myself in readiness to take it; and in the mean time would fall upon Charbonnières, that the example of this fort, for the taking of which I demanded only eight days, might teach them what to expect from Montmelian.

Accordingly I laid siege to Charbonnières, where I suffered incredible fatigues; the first difficulty was

1600. to bring the cannon to bear on the place; the only road that led to it was extremely narrow, bordered on one side by the river Arc, of which the bank was all along perpendicularly steep, and on the other by impracticable rocks: they could with difficulty travel a league a day, because they were every moment obliged to unharness the cannon, one of the wheels almost always running over the side of the precipice. We were certain at least of favourable weather; for in this climate it is generally fair during the autumn; however, there now fell such violent rains that the road was all under water, and the eight days, which I had thought sufficient for the taking the place, had been almost wholly consumed in bringing up the carriages. This was my excuse in the council, against the malicious remark which the count of Soissons and others did not fail to make upon the promise I had given. The king, who that moment looked at me attentively, perceiving that my face was very red, and all overspread with pimples, ran to me, and unbuttoning my cloaths, examined my neck and breast, crying, "Ah! my friend, you are very ill." He sent immediately for Du-Laurens*, who, after examining those pimples, said, that by bleeding and taking a little care of myself they would be removed. I had, indeed, over-heated myself with labour; and, when in a violent sweat, had been wet quite through my cloaths with the rain, without perceiving it. I was bled as soon as I got to my quarters, which were at Semoy: the king had his at Rochette, from whence he sent Thermes the next day to know how I was; and was greatly surprised to hear that his messenger had found me on horseback, visiting my batteries.

Before I erected them, I was willing to take a more exact view of the place, beginning with Aiguebelle, for that was the name of the little city at the foot of the fort. It seemed to me that I was known every where, and that there was a general conspiracy

* André Du-Laurens, the king's physician.

against

against me; for, as often as I appeared in view, a 1600. volley was discharged upon me. The rock upon which Charbonnières is situated, appearing inaccessible on all sides, and not to be taken by the cannon, I was greatly afflicted: however, examining it more narrowly, I thought that I had found out a part where what seemed on the outside a natural rock, might probably be a place filled up with earth covered with green turf. I repressed the joy this discovery gave me, till the night afforded me an opportunity of being convinced of it. I approached very near the wall, being favoured by the darkness of the night, and was transported with joy, when, upon trying the ground with my pike, I found that it went down as I desired, and that this bastion was such as I had believed it to be. I was no longer in doubt on what side I should batter the fort, and no difficulty now remained, but to find out some place proper for erecting these batteries; for Charbonnières is, indeed, surrounded with mountains that command the town, but so steep that a man can hardly ascend them on foot. I began again to creep along these mountains, which, in reality, had a terrible appearance, and all seemed wholly inaccessible to the cannon, except one, upon the declivity of which I saw a road where it was not impossible but some pieces of cannon might be heaved up by main strength. Unfortunately the access to this road was by another which passed so near the fort, that they might pelt us from thence with stones.

This was another obstacle, which did not, however, cool me in my attempt. I chose out two hundred French, and as many Swiss, to each of whom I promised a crown, provided they could, by this road, bring up six cannon, which I gave them, and mount them on an eminence that I pointed out to them. I pitched upon a very dark night for this work, recommending to them particularly, to make as little noise as possible; and, to prevent the besieged from observing it, caused horses and carmen to ad-

1600.

vance in the opposite roads, whose cries and the smacking of the whips, drew all the enemy's fire to that side, but with no effect, for these carts were covered, in their march, by trees, gabions, and even by the walls, while my men that were employed in forcing up the cannon, escaped the notice of the besieged, who were deafened with the noise of their own fire. I appointed La Vallée *, lieutenant of the ordnance in Brittany, and other officers, to watch over and encourage my men in this uncommon method of carriage. It rained so violently, that La Vallée and the rest of the officers left their post to go to supper, and the soldiers their cannon, when they were got about half way. This was what I had expected; and, having taken that road, I met them in their retreat, and gave them a severe reprimand, threatening them that they should have no pay for three months, and brought them all back that instant to their task, which they resumed, and the cannon again began to move. I did not quit them till I saw them out of danger, which did not happen without receiving some check: their delay at length occasioned their being discovered, and six were killed and eight wounded.

I got back to my quarters while it was yet dark, soaked through with the rain, and so disguised with dirt, that I was not to be known, but full of joy that my six pieces of cannon were out of danger, though not yet upon the top of the rocks. I slept an hour, and breakfasted, and returning to my work, met La Vallée, who, not knowing what I had done, began to value himself upon the performance of the night. The reproaches I loaded him with, while I contradicted what he said, ought to have covered him with confusion; but he was the most undaunted liar I ever knew. "What! you have been there " then," said he, without the smallest discomposure. " Well, I sincerely confess I am a fool." " You

* Michael de La Vallée Piquemouche, governor of Comper.

“are so, indeed,” replied I, “and something worse, 1600.
“but avoid such a behaviour for the future, and
“repair your fault.” It was not doubted, but the
besieged would endeavour to make themselves
amends for their being surpris’d; which did not hin-
der the cannon, by the mere force of my men’s la-
bour, without any assistance from the horses, from
being placed upon the rock at nine o’clock, where,
during that time, I had made provision of gabions,
planks, and every thing that was necessary to make
platforms there.

But, when the gabions came to be filled, no earth
was to be found within half a league of the place:
all that could be got in this stubborn ground was
stony, and could not be used for making port-holes
and platforms, without running the danger of lam-
ing all who were employed in the work. The offi-
cers, for want of this usual defence, seeing themselves
exposed to the whole fire of the place, came, in great
consternation, to acquaint me with the condition
they were in. I told them, without any appearance
of emotion, that they should begin directly the pali-
sade, which I had ordered them to erect along the
borders of the rocks, making it very high and thick
to deprive the enemies, at least, of the sight of the
cannon, which otherwise they would be able to
dismount; and this was performed immediately,
these mountains being almost all covered with wood.
To supply the rest, I ordered the carpenters, and
pioniers of the army, to cut down two hundred large
beech trees, which were cleaved into billets, some
round, to fill up the gabions, others square, to make
a secure lodgment for the six pieces of cannon; and
the better to conceal their last situation from the
enemy, to which the branches of the palisade greatly
contributed, I contrived, that there should be on
each side several openings filled with baskets of earth;
upon which the enemy made a continual fire, with-
out knowing at what part of the palisado the artillery
was placed, till the moment when we were prepared to

1600.

dismount the battery of the fort, and throw down the palisade by which our cannon had been concealed. At two o'clock in the afternoon, this work was completed; and about an hour afterward his majesty came to visit it, and embracing me, assured me of the satisfaction it gave him. He saw no obstacle that should hinder us from beginning to batter the place. I represented to him, that it was still necessary to delude the besieged till night: this prince submitted to my opinion, but the count of Soissons, d'Epemon, La Guiche, and Villeroi, who attended him, making observations that his cannon was pointed against a rock, on which it would be useless to lose more time, Henry came to me and said, that he would have them fire, that instant, some vollies upon the opposite ravelin: again I contested this point with him, and perhaps with rather too much heat; for it gave me great uneasiness to see a work, that had cost me so much labour, likely to be ruined by too much precipitation. My resistance put Henry into a passion, and he again, and in a very absolute manner, commanded me to obey him, even adding, that I forgot he was the master. "Yes, fire," replied I immediately, "you are the master, and shall be obeyed, though at the expence of ruining every thing." I caused the palisade to be thrown down, and gave orders that they should fire, but I would not be a witness of it, and withdrew in great discontent. As the guns were not aimed, every body took upon them to direct them according to his own mind, but no one hit the right place. After a hundred ineffectual discharges, the king sent La Guesle for me, to complain to me of the faults of my batteries. I replied, that I intreated his majesty would excuse me, for it being now sunset, it was no longer time to undertake any thing. His majesty ordered the firing to cease, and every one withdrawing, I came and lay in the midst of my batteries, which I caused to be completed during the remainder of the night, notwithstanding the rain that

that fell in great abundance. The besieged, on their side, laboured as hard, and were not without some apprehensions that they should find the place, to which they gave the most attention, defective: I judged so by the fires and candles which I saw lighted up in the fort, and contented myself with interrupting their security, by firing some discharges from time to time. 1600.

At the break of day, there arose so thick a fog, that, at six o'clock, the fort could not be seen: this unlucky accident gave me great uneasiness, because all my batteries were ready; and I had boasted over night, that I would take Charbonnières the next day. I fancied, however, that the agitation of the air, occasioned by the cannon, might possibly disperse the fog, and I caused some volleys to be fired. Either by chance, or by a natural effect, that which I had jestingly proposed, succeeded almost beyond my hopes. No sooner had the rest of the artillery answered the cannon from the top of the mountain, than the fog wholly disappeared. The besieged had been all night employed in erecting a battery of four pieces of cannon over-against my six, which the imprudence committed the day before had discovered to them, and which at that instant, they endeavoured to dismount. I found that there was no time to be given them, and caused a piece to be pointed directly opposite to their port-holes, which rendered two of their four cannons useless, killed one gunner, and wounded two others: but this did not happen till after their discharge had killed, on our side, six gunners and two pioniers, and at length made our pieces useless, till they were dislodged from thence.

The king ran thither, upon the noise, at nine o'clock, and ordered his dinner to be brought to a place which I had contrived in such a manner, that he might see every thing that passed without danger. This was an enclosure made with the largest trees, laid at their length one upon another, in the form of

1600. a rampart. I shewed his majesty the bodies of those that had been just killed, and made him sensible, that this was the consequence of the bad counsel that was followed the day before. I did not say this without design, perceiving that the same persons continued still to find fault with my work, and to prejudice his majesty against me. I did not suffer myself to be at all discomposed with their observations, and told them haughtily, that, not having yet eat any thing, though I had laboured hard all night, I would leave the place free to any of them that were desirous of playing the grand master of the ordnance, but that, at my return, if they did not permit me to order my batteries as I pleased, I would abandon them entirely. My table, as grand master, consisted of forty covers, and was placed under a kind of half arch, formed by nature in the rock, and hung with ivy. The king sent me a large trout pye, which was sent him from Geneva. My dinner was soon over, and I went again to intreat his majesty that he would suffer me to perform the duties of my employment alone, and renewed my promises that I would make him master of Charbonnières that day. The king replied, that he would be contented if it was taken in three days: upon which La Guesle said, that, if he was in the place, he should know how to hinder it from being taken in a month. Go there then, said I to them all, fatigued with their impertinence, and if I do not hang you all to-day, let me pass for a boaster.

The king then withdrew into his enclosure, and delivered me from the importunate presence of his courtiers for three hours, which he passed in waiting for his dinner, at table, and in surveying the park of artillery. At the end of this time, I saw him come back with the count of Soissons, to whom he said loud enough for me to hear, "This place will not be taken to-day." The count answered, with great complaisance, That his majesty, who had more knowledge of war than any person whatsoever, ought

ought to make use of his authority to force me to obey, instead of wasting time in battering a rock, which could not be hurt by the cannon. I had my revenge that instant. The king came just at the time that the enemy beat a parley, and the lieutenant of the place came out to treat with me. I intreated his majesty to have no part in the capitulation; and I told the lieutenant that he might go back again, for I was resolved that the garrison should surrender at discretion. The lieutenant returned with a personated boldness, saying, that there were still two hundred men in the fort who were able to hold it out eight days longer. Henry withdrew, leaving Lesdiguières and Villeroi with me, who persuaded me to accept of the conditions offered by the besieged. Lesdiguières even carried me towards the fort, to shew me that the enemies were not reduced to extremity. I stopped him when he came within two or three hundred paces of the curtain, telling him, that it would be rashness to expose himself to the mouth of the cannon of the fort; and I withdrew to a rock a hundred paces distant, which served me as a shelter, while these gentlemen very unseasonably rallied me for my caution: but they soon changed their tone when a terrible fire obliged them to follow me.

The lieutenant of the fort returned a second time, but with proposals little different from the former. I sent him back without hearing him: upon which Villeroi said, That, if the city failed of being taken that day, he could not dispense with himself from acquainting the king that it was owing wholly to me. I pretended not to hear him: and, sending the besieged my last resolutions in writing, ordered the artillery again to play: the second discharge set fire to the powder of the besieged, and killed twenty or twenty-five of their men, and six or seven women; at the third, the little ravelin fell down entirely, and they could no longer bring any assistance to the breach, because the cannon, sweeping along a low path

1600.

path that led to it, at every fire destroyed some of their best soldiers. This made them resolve to beat a parley once more, which I pretended not to hear, although I saw their drummer carried up in the air at the height of twelve feet, by a cannon ball which entered the ground where he stood, but did him no other hurt. The besieged then held up a pike, with a flag fastened to the top, crying out that they surrendered, and implored us to cease firing. Yet the artillery continued to play, till the enemies, holding out their hands over the breach to our soldiers, I was afraid some French would be killed amongst them. I then mounted my horse and entered the city on full gallop. It was lawful to treat it as one carried by assault; but that heart must be wholly impenetrable to compassion, that could not be softened by a sight so truly pitiable as now presented itself: it was the women, the wounded, and those that were scorched by the fire, who came and threw themselves at my feet. I never in any other place beheld the sex so lovely as in this city, nor so finished a beauty as one woman in particular who came to implore my mercy: instead of executing my threat, to hang all the inhabitants, I gave the same conditions I had offered at first, and caused the garrison to be conducted to a place of security which I had appointed for them.

Notwithstanding this success with Charbonnières, I still found great opposition in the council to my proposal of attacking the castle of Montmelian. The debate ran very high: "Take care what you do," said his majesty to me, prejudiced by the great number that disapproved of the attempt, "for if we are obliged to raise the siege, every one will exclaim against you, and I possibly shall be amongst the first." They were not sensible at that time what a strong train of artillery, well conducted, was able to do at a siege: what had happened at Charbonnières had so confirmed me in my opinion on that head, that I did not scruple to engage that I would carry Montmelian in five weeks, as I had already promised
in

in a former council: I stipulated only for one condition, which his majesty could not deny me, because he had accepted it, without its being named, and this was, that he should not be present at the siege. I foresaw that it would be very bloody. I produced a plan of the fortress, and of the attack; and every one agreeing that I should make the attempt, I laid siege to the castle of Montmelian. 1600.

This castle is situated on a rock almost as hard as that of Charbonnières, and so high, that it commands the whole country about it; steep and inaccessible on all sides except that next the city, where the ascent is less difficult, but on which, to make amends, there runs a ditch, cut in the rock itself, and which must have been done with infinite labour with the point of a sharp chissel; besides which, there were three bastions, that could neither be sapped nor undermined, their foundations being of rock itself, almost impenetrable, and above a toise and a half deep. The country is strewn with several mountains; but some are so distant, that they appeared to be absolutely out of the reach of cannon, and the rocks that are nearest are so steep and pointed at the top, and so rugged and bare, that far from being possible to carry up and make use of cannon, it is difficult to believe that a man could climb up. The castle was then provided with thirty pieces of cannon, with powder for eight thousand vollies at least, a proportionable garrison, and ammunition in great abundance.

The first thought that occurred to my mind, and supported it against obstacles in appearance unsurmountable, was, that however solid and continued the rock seemed to be, upon which, or rather in which, the bastions were raised, it was not possible that it should be all of equal hardness; and if one part of it only was ever so little weaker than the rest, the artillery I had would secure me the means of opening a passage through it. In order to be convinced, I began to open the trenches before the bastion

1600.

stion called Mauvoisin; for otherwise it would have been impossible to have approached near enough to discern whether this whole mass was an entire rock, cut with a chissel; but the rock which we found even with the ground hindered us from carrying on the trenches.

I was obliged to have recourse to artifice; and one very dark night caused a hut to be built with clay, and thatched over, very near this bastion, and so low that it could not be thrown down by the cannon: it was shot through and through with the small arms as soon as the day discovered it to the besieged; but it was not overturned, and none of our men were in it. I suffered the enemy to discharge their rage for some days upon this hut, till of themselves they should cease to fire; which at length they did, supposing it had been built there to make them spend their powder in vain. When I found the besieged neglected it, I entered it in the night, taking no other arms with me but a buckler, with which, upon occasion, I could entirely cover my body against the fire. From this hut I carefully examined the whole bastion; I perceived there a light at the bottom, from whence I concluded that it was hollow, and that it was not an entire rock which could be cut into so deep. Without doubt the besieged were then making some repairs there. The day beginning to appear, I perceived likewise that the flank was uncovered; and this was proof that it was not a solid rock that formed either; and that this flank presented itself naked, and easy to be pierced with the cannon. I was now satisfied, and had no other care but how to get out safely, which in broad day could not be done without difficulty, the hut not being above a hundred paces distant from the parapet, which was lined with soldiers, and I had above two hundred to go before I could shelter myself. I seized that moment when the guards being relieved, the soldiers began to be careless, and leaving my buckler in the hut, I began to run as fast as I was able;

able; four centinels perceiving me, cried out, and fired upon me at the same time; their musquet-shot whistled about my ears and covered me with gravel and flint stones, but did not wound me; before the other soldiers were ready, I had gained the nearest lodgment. 1600.

I had at first resolved to place a battery of cannon on an eminence on the side of the Isere, where they might be carried up more easily by the help of steps cut by the hands of men; but having observed, on the opposite side of the water, another eminence which faced the citadel, and which had this advantage, that from thence might be seen the road that led to the walls of the castle, and to the magazine, the entrance of the tower, and the guard house: I preferred this last, and considered upon the means to carry up six pieces of cannon. This eminence was perpendicularly steep on all sides but one, and even this side of the ascent was a league about: but this was not the greatest difficulty; to plant them there we must level rocks of such hardness, that most of the officers thought the enterprize ridiculous.

The enemies were not of the same opinion: as soon as they found that we had undertaken to make a lodgment upon the edge of the rock, they pointed six pieces of cannon there likewise, and made a continual fire: the first volley was shot one day when I was giving directions about the works, with my staff of command in my hand, dressed in a green coat laced with gold, and a plume of green and white feathers upon my head. I observed that this shot had passed a good deal above my head, and that which followed it as much below: perceiving that they were going to fire a third time, I said to Lesine, Maignan, and Feugeres, that this would be between both, and that, without doubt, the besieged having perceived me would take an exact aim. I retired two or three steps behind a shelving part of the rock, from whence I held my pike in one hand fixed in the place where I had stood myself; one ball threw down

1600. down the pike, the others killed three pioniers and two gunners, and broke some glasse and bottles that had been brought for a refreshment, and were placed in a hole of the rock. This accident was related to his majesty, as an instance of rashness in me; and he wrote to me immediately, that my person being still more necessary to him for the business of the state than war, he desired that I would not act like a meer soldier of fortune, who had a reputation to raise; and that he would recal me, if I disobeyed this command.

Henry could not resist the desire he had to see the disposition of this siege, and wrote to me a second time, desiring I would dispense with the promise he had given me to the contrary, assuring me, that he would go to those places only that I should appoint, and with no other attendants than the count of Soissons, D'Epernon, Bellegarde, and me. I entreated him at least to disguise himself in an ordinary cloak; and, above all, to shun, at the expence of going half a league about, a certain field, strewed over with flint stones, opposite to which the besieged kept a party of thirty or forty soldiers continually, armed with musquets; and ten or twelve pieces of cannon were pointed there, because they knew that our men passed every moment through this field, to go to the new battery raised upon the rock. I did not doubt but that he would have complied with this request; but when he was upon the spot, he could not resolve to use this precaution; and my intreaties being ineffectual, we marched all five in a file. Some musquet-shot that we were exposed to at first made two or three of the company look pale; but it was much worse when we entered the field; there was at once so terrible a discharge of the heavy cannon and small-shot, that we saw ourselves in a moment all covered with earth, and our skin scratched with a shower of those little flint-stones. Henry making the sign of the cross, "It is now, said I, that I acknowledge you to be a good catholic." "Let

"us go, said he, this is a bad place." We doubled our pace, esteeming it a singular piece of good fortune that none of us were killed, or at least lamed. No one thought of returning the same way, but took the road from the mountains, where I caused horses to be brought for the company. 1600.

The king was a little ashamed of his unnecessary rashness, which was the cause, that some days afterwards, when I sent him notice that all my batteries were finished, his majesty, who was then returned to the Tarantaife, having an inclination to see them, ordered me to make a truce for some hours with the governor. The king's curiosity being satisfied, I was seized with an inclination to exert the prerogative of a grand master exercising his office in the royal presence; but as this could not be done without a discharge of the artillery, which would have been considered as an infraction of the truce, which was not yet expired, to induce the besieged to break it I ordered some commissaries to send certain ammunitions to the battery upon the rock, which they had an occasion for there. The enemy, who had not lost any part of their fierceness, and probably repented of having granted the truce, cried out that it was violated, and that they were going to fire. Accordingly, they fired twelve or fifteen cannon-shot. I had given my men orders, in case this happened, to hold themselves in readiness to answer them immediately by a general discharge. This was the first, and afforded matter for serious reflection to the besieged, when they saw their tower battered by fifty cannon: they were the first to demand a continuation of the truce; especially when a second discharge succeeded so rapidly. From that moment they began to alter their opinion, that the citadel was impregnable, and privately sought out ways to procure an honourable composition.

Two women were by chance the first movers * of

* The historian who has given us the life of the duke d'Epemon, ascribes to him the honour of taking Montmelian.

1600. this accommodation. Madam de Brandis, wife to the governor of Montmelian, and then with him in the castle, amused herself with making little glass toys and pieces of chair work. My wife being then in the town, she sent her a pair of ear-rings and two chains of exquisite workmanship. Madam de Rosny, in return, sent her wine and venison, and desired to know if it was not possible for them to see each other: they obtained permission for it, and passed three afternoons together with such familiarity, that at length they began to consider how Montmelian might be surrendered with honour. Each acquainted her husband with the subject of their conversations, and we were so far from opposing them, that they were authorised to go on, but concealed from one another that they acted by permission. Madam de Brandis had an indisposition that made the country air necessary for her. Her husband thought he could procure this favour through the interposition of my wife; and she made so reasonable a representation to him of the condition to which he would be soon reduced, without being able to obtain honourable terms afterwards, that he consented to treat with me, and sent me a deputation for that purpose. I dispatched notice of it to the king, who proposed it to his council; and it was there resolved, that a month should be granted to the governor, after which, if he was not relieved, the place should be surrendered. I was very sure that it could not hold out so long, and that it was relying too much upon the doubtful sincerity of an enemy to grant such conditions. I gave my opinion freely, but it was to no purpose to oppose a resolution in which envy had as great a share as fear.

The king did not begin to repent of having followed the counsels of marechal Biron and d'Epernon rather than mine, till, a little while before the expiration of the time granted to the besieged, a report was spread, that an army of twenty-five thousand men was coming over the Alps to their assistance.

The king acquainted me with the perplexity into which this news threw him: he was determined to meet the enemies and fight them; but he was sensible of the danger he ran, in leaving behind him such a fortress as Montmelian. He asked me if by some means or other there was not a possibility of putting him in possession of it before that time. Difficult as it appeared, it was nevertheless accomplished, and in this manner.

Ever since the suspension of arms, the count of Brandis suffered all strangers to enter his castle who brought provisions and necessaries which the wounded, and even madam de Brandis herself, had occasion for. As there was only one gate to enter by, the crowd was often so great that some blows passed between them; for which the governor could not chastise them, because there were a great many Frenchmen amongst them, and therefore intreated me to apply a remedy to this inconvenience: and I now believed that I had found the opportunity I sought for. I placed a guard of fifty chosen men at the gate of the castle; commanded by officers, who, being informed of my design; accustomed the guards of the castle to see them enter it at first three or four only in number, afterwards more, till at length, the garrison not daring any longer either to hinder or fire upon them; they found themselves almost masters of the castle itself, without giving them any assistance; but, on the contrary, instead of lessening the disorder, these French did all they could to increase it.

Brandis imputed all to the licentiousness of the soldiers; and complained to me of it. I told him, that he might fall upon all those strangers, whom I supposed to be country people. He replied, that he would have done so, but for the great number of my soldiers that were amongst them; and that rather than do them any violence, although without any intention to break the conditions, he chose to confide to me the care of putting an end to the disorder. I seemed to yield to this expedient (which was what I

1600. most ardently wished) only to restore order and quiet, and told the governor, that I could easily accomplish it, if I had a guard within equal to that without: he consented to it, and I caused fifty soldiers to enter; but these were not all, thirty had got in before, and a much greater number had slipped in with them; I came thither myself likewise, with all my train: and from that time our party was so strong, that the fort and part of the tower was at our disposal.

Brandis then found the fault he had committed, but could repair it no otherwise than by shewing himself still more generous. He came to me and told me, that he consented I should take possession of the tower, and that he remitted it wholly upon the security of my word. I resolved not to abuse his confidence, and faithfully observed all the articles. I supped and lay in the tower that night; and the next day after that in which I had received this commission from the king, I went to tell him, that without any fears from Montmelian, he might march to meet his enemies; which he did in good order, and at the head of his army; but the information he had received was found to be false.

The garrison of Montmelian marched out after the month was elapsed, and yielded the place to his majesty, who commanded me to settle Crequy there with his company. The garrison was reinforced, and provided with great plenty of ammunition of all kinds. I would have persuaded the king to have dismantled this place, as it must undoubtedly be restored to the duke of Savoy in case of a peace; and to have done the same by all the other conquered fortresses: but the advice of the courtiers, who all seemed to be in the pay of the duke, saved Montmelian from a treatment that good policy required.

The mystery of this conduct with regard to Montmelian, as well as many other things, was explained two years afterwards, by the discovery of some letters of marechal Biron in cyphers: he told the duke of Savoy, to whom they were addressed, that he had obtained

obtained a month for the garrison of Montmelian, to give him time to raise the siege: that he had nothing to expect from his friends, unless he made an effort to save this place, which could hold out three months longer; and assured him, that the reduction of it would give him great concern. In the letter he wrote to this prince after the castle was taken, he tells him, that his negligence in succouring it had silenced the French lords in his party, who would have declared against the king, if, by advancing to join them, he had put it in their power to do so with safety. Notwithstanding the caution he observed in not writing their names, they were all so well described that it was not difficult to know them. The silence I keep with regard to these names, is only in favour of some whom the public perhaps has not suspected.

Montmelian was not yet surrendered, when it was reported in the French army that cardinal Aldobrandin, the pope's nephew and legate, was on his way to come and treat with his majesty concerning a peace and his marriage. The king having appointed me to go and receive his eminence with all imaginable honours, I advanced to meet him with a body of 3000 foot, and 500 troopers, all spruce fellows. It was not difficult for him to perceive that it was the grand master of the ordnance who waited for him, by the manner in which he was received at his approach to Montmelian, the truce affording me an opportunity to make use of the artillery of the place as if it had been my own. Upon this occasion I joined them together, to pay him the greater honour: the signal was given by a white flag raised on the battery of the rock: mine began after a great fire of the small-shot, and was answered by that of the castle, in such a manner, that both having time to load again, this double discharge of an hundred and seventy cannons, performed with the utmost regularity, and multiplied by the echoes formed amidst the mountains, had the noblest effect imaginable,

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1600. though not in the legate's opinion, I believe, who was more frightened than soothed, by an honour so magnificently dreadful, believing all the mountains about him were going to fall down, and had several times recourse to the sign of the cross.

I carried the cardinal to dinner at Notre Dame de Miens, and forewarned him of two things relating to the business he mentioned to me; one was, that he should give no credit to any of those persons who would make a boast to him of their interest with his majesty; the other, that if they promised him to get all the places taken from the duke of Savoy to be restored without being demolished, he should believe them still less, for he might be assured this would never happen. After this caution, I resigned him freely to those sent by his majesty to fetch him, and continued my hostilities, by besieging the citadels of Bourg and fort Saint-Catherine.

The latter was attacked before the other, at the intreaty of the citizens of Geneva, whom the king was glad of an opportunity to oblige. Upon our arrival at this fort, which is situated on a rising ground, in an open field, of which it seems to be the centre, marechal Biron, who by chance was near me, asked me to go that instant, on horseback as we were, and reconnoitre the place with him. I told him that we were too gayly dressed, and had too many plumes on, to examine it in open day: for the marechal was mounted on a white horse, and wore a large plume of feathers of the same colour. "No, no, said he, you need not be under any apprehension: morbieu! they will not dare to fire upon us." "Let us go then, replied I, if you will, for if it rains upon me it will sprinkle upon you." Accordingly, we came within two hundred paces of the fort, and observed it a long time, while they only fired twelve or fifteen vollies of small-shot, and I believe in the air, although we were about twenty horse; which surprised me greatly. "Certainly, sir, said I to the marechal, there

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" is

“ is no one within, or they are asleep, or afraid of
 “ us.” The king could with difficulty believe this, 1600.
 because being there himself the day before, with six
 horse only, they fired repeated vollies at his ap-
 proach; and when I returned the next morning at
 the break of day, on foot, and with no other com-
 pany than Erard and Feugeres, I was received with
 so great a noise of the artillery, that the king sent
 Montespan thither, believing it was a fally. “ Whom
 “ are these fellows aiming at?” said Montespan to
 me, finding no-body in sight. “ At me, I be-
 “ lieve, replied I, but I have seen all that I wanted
 “ to see.” However, I guessed soon after the rea-
 son of that respect which they shewed marechal Bi-
 ron. I perceived that the flank of the bastions of
 Saint-Catherine were so bad that great part of them
 had fallen down, and that the ditch was in no better
 a condition. I assured his majesty, that as soon as
 the trenches were carried to the extremity of the ditch
 the place would surrender. In effect, the besieged,
 who were likewise in want of every thing, demanded
 to capitulate, if they were not succoured in six days.

After I had opened the trench, I desired leave
 from the king to make a tour to Geneva: I arrived
 there the next day, with an hundred horse, and came
 very seasonably to relieve this city from the terrors
 which the presence of a great number of catholics
 within their walls occasioned. Messieurs de Guise,
 d'Elbeuf, d'Epernon, de Biron, de la Guiche, and
 many others, were there, with their several atten-
 dants. I assured them, that his majesty had their
 interest at heart, and that I would not leave them
 while those gentlemen continued amongst them: but
 the remembrance of the late persecutions was yet too
 recent in the minds of the citizens; they could not
 be satisfied till I had removed the occasion of their
 fears; which I did that evening by speaking to those
 gentlemen, who all left Geneva the next day. The
 city deputed twelve of their chief citizens, with Beza,
 their minister, at their head, to compliment his ma-

1600.  jesty, and to endeavour to obtain a request that they kept very secret; this was, the demolition of fort Saint-Catherine, which they were most ardently desirous of. Beza delivered himself like a man of sense, and one who knew how to praise with delicacy; congratulating the protestants upon the happiness which the reign of so good a prince promised them. Henry thanked the deputies and the city, offering to bestow upon it any of his conquests which should be most convenient for it; and preventing their request, told them in a low voice, that they should have the pleasure to be masters of the fate of fort Saint-Catherine; and that he gave them his word, in my presence (for he held me by the hand at the same time) that no intreaties whatsoever should hinder him from razing it. Upon which the deputies withdrew, extremely well pleased.

His majesty, at cardinal Aldobrandin's request, consented that the conferences on the subject of a peace should be held at Lyons, and appointed the cardinal Du-Perron, the constable, the chancellor, Villeroi, and Jeannin, to treat with the legate: they had yet come to no agreement, when the future queen * arrived in that city. As soon as the king

* This princess left Florence on the 17th of October, having embarked at Leghorn, and, with an escort of seventeen galleys, landed at Toulon, from whence she came by the way of Marseilles and Avignon to Lyons, where the king arrived post on the 9th of November. As soon as he alighted (I take the following account from the most authentic Memoirs of those times) the queen happened to be at supper; and having a desire to see her at table without being discovered, he went in as far as the drawing-room, which was very much crowded; but he was known the moment he appeared by those nearest the door, who opened to make way for him: upon which, his majesty went away directly, without going

farther. The queen, in the mean time, was well aware of all this, but still gave no other signs than by putting the plates away as often as she was served with anything, and eat so little, that she seemed to have sat down rather for form's sake than to sup. After the table was removed, she returned immediately to her chamber. The king, who waited only for this, came to her chamber door, and ordering M. le Grand to go before, he knocked so hard, that the queen thought it must be the king: upon this she stepped forward at the very instant that M. le Grand entered the room, who was followed by his majesty, at whose feet she immediately threw herself. The king raised her up, embraced her with great tenderness,

was informed of it he quitted his quarters, and set out in very rainy weather, riding post, with great part of the lords of his court. It was twelve o'clock at night when we got to the bridge of Lyons, and waited there a full hour, wet through with the rain, and almost perished with cold, before they would open the gate; for his majesty, that he might have the pleasure of surprizing the queen, would not suffer himself to be named. They had not yet seen each other. The marriage ceremony was performed without any pomp. We attended the king at supper, who afterwards dismissed us to refresh ourselves likewise; and he retired to the queen's apartment.

1600.

His majesty's arrival only increased the warmth with which they contested the articles of the peace: the plenipotentiaries were almost all in the duke of Savoy's interest, and glad of an opportunity to make their court to the legate; which was the cause that Henry thought it necessary to make them give an account of their negotiation, and severely blamed the commissioners for having exceeded the power that was given them. Bellievre and Villeroi had promised the legate, that none of the fortresses which had been taken should be demolished, but especially Saint-Catherine, for which the legate particularly solicited, as being the best, and even the only bulwark the duke of Savoy had against the republic of Geneva. Henry made them sensible, that their pre-

and all that was polite, passionate, and respectful, passed on both sides. After the first compliments were over, the king took her hand, and led her to the fire-place, where he continued talking with her above half an hour; he afterwards went to supper, but eat very sparingly. In the mean time, he bid madam de Nemours tell the queen, that he had not provided himself with a bed, expecting she would give him part of hers, which from that time was to be in common between

them. Madam de Nemours carrying this message to the queen, she returned for answer, That she had come thither only to obey his majesty as the humblest of his servants. Upon this, the king undressed, and went directly to the queen's chamber, who by this time was in bed. *Chronologie Septennaire, an. 1600.* where also may be seen the particulars of the queen's journey, and her reception in the towns of France, &c. *De Thou, liv. 125. Matthieu, tom. II. p. 378.*

1600.

cupitation in subscribing to an article of this importance without consulting him, had given him some suspicion of them; and added, that in a few days he would acquaint them with his intentions upon that head. Then sending for me, he told me, that the shortest way to prevent the solicitation which he expected from the legate, would be to blow up the five bastions of the fort, and to send word to the citizens of Geneva to come and complete the demolition of it. No order was ever more expeditiously nor more effectually executed. The Genevois, in one night, laid this citadel even with the ground, and carried away all the materials so carefully, that the next day it could with difficulty have been believed that there ever had been a fort in the place; and at first the report ran, that it was destroyed by lightning. When the truth was known, the legate expressed great resentment at it, and did not scruple to confess, in the heat of his passion, that I was the only person who had not deceived him with flattering hopes on this head, and that he had not sufficiently attended to my admonitions. But his having, upon the faith of the commissioners, given very different expectations to the pope, was what he was chiefly concerned at. For three or four days the negotiation was entirely broke off; and when it was afterwards resumed, it was with so much animosity on his eminence's part, that he rejected all the propositions that were made him. These propositions were, That the duke of Savoy should yield to the king the course of the river Rhone and its borders: That he should not erect any fort within a league of it to favour the Spaniards passage: That he should leave to the republic of Geneva the enjoyment of certain villages specified likewise: That Bêche-Dauphin* should be demolished, Chateau-Dauphin restored: and lastly, that the duke should pay a hundred and fifty thousand crowns for the expences of the war.

* Frontier of Dauphiné.

1600.

The king looking upon this affair as wholly impracticable, through the obstinacy of the legate, resolved to carry on the war more vigorously than before, and communicated his design to me, which was, to go in search of the duke of Savoy at the head of his army; while I, with the artillery, battered the citadel of Bourg. Each of us had particular obstacles to this double project, besides the want of money, which was common to both. I found the enterprize on Bourg very difficult to be executed, the season being now so far advanced: the difference between this castle and that of Montmelian, with which I think it may be compared, is this, that for those that have only ten or twelve pieces of cannon, Montmelian is equivalent to ten such places as Bourg, because that the reduction of Montmelian depends upon having artillery sufficient to batter the out-works; but for an army sixty cannon strong, the citadel of Montmelian is not more difficult to carry than that of Bourg; because this last being more regular than the other, it can only be attacked methodically and by slow degrees. Had the counsel I gave, to attack this fort immediately after the surrender of Montmelian, been followed, it would have been now in the king's possession.

With regard to this prince, his perplexity was occasioned by his knowing in what manner the greatest part of his general officers conspired with Spain and the duke of Savoy against him: he had great reason to be apprehensive of engaging himself in the enemy's country, if they were with him: Lesdiguières was the only one on whom he could depend; he had lately given an instance of his fidelity, in sending notice by Calignon, that the duke of Bouillon made use of a man named Ondevous to carry on his correspondence with the great lords of the kingdom. It is certain, that if Calignon had been more diligent to acquit himself of his commission, Ondevous would not have had time to escape as he did,
and

1600. and his detention might have laid open all the schemes of the seditious; but there is no appearance that this happened through the fault of Lefdiguieres. I advised the king to rely entirely upon him, and to bind him still closer to his service, by making him a marechal of France, and governor of Piedmont. As for the rest, it was easy to prevent the consequences of their ill intentions, by giving them employments at a distance from the body of the army.

But the affair that appeared most pressing to us both, being to procure a supply of money, it was resolved that I should set out for Paris in four days: and that I might be enabled to pass six entire weeks there, I employed these four days in making all the necessary preparations for the attack of Bourg, in paying the soldiers out of what little money remained, and in providing for the ordinary as well as extraordinary expences of the king's household. The very next day I sent away my wife and my equipages before me, with directions to wait for me at Rouanne, where I proposed, as soon as I arrived, to send them down the Loire as far as Orleans: they waited there for me three or four days longer, because my measures were broke by the alterations that happened in the affair of the peace.

When I went to take leave of the king, he advised me to visit the legate also before I set out, he having always expressed great esteem for me. I went to visit him booted, my post-horses waiting for me on the other side of the river, opposite to his lodgings. He asked me where I was going in that equipage? "To Italy, replied I; and I shall go with good company to kiss the pope's foot." "How! to Italy?" said he, in great amazement: "no, that must not be, sir; I beg you will assist me to renew this peace." I seemed to consent, in respect only to his mediation, the king having laid aside all thoughts of it. I repeated, in a few words, all the principal articles that had been already proposed,

posed, and afterwards asked him if he would give credit to what I was going to say to him? Having assured me he would, I told him, that he might be absolutely certain, that of these articles, his majesty would abate none of his demands with regard to the borders of the Rhone, the villages in the neighbourhood of Geneva, Chateau-Dauphin, and Beche-Dauphin; because I was well acquainted with the king's intentions in all these respects. He desired to know my reasons: which I excused myself from telling him, on account of the short time I had to stay. After walking, thoughtfully, several times backwards and forwards in his chamber, he asked me if, with the same protestations of sincerity, I would assure him, that, provided he agreed to all these points, there should be no mention made of the other. I told him, that I believed I might promise this. Upon which, he entreated me to go and acquaint the king with what he had said. Henry was glad to see me come back: and I returned a moment afterwards to the legate with full powers from his majesty. And we concluded that * instant a treaty which had languished so long a time; the conditions of which were as follows.

The duke of Savoy, in exchange for the marquisate of Saluces, which the king of France gave up, was to make a cession to his majesty of the fortresses of Cental, Monts, and Roquesparviere, all Bresse entirely, the borders and country of the Rhone on both sides as far as Lyons, except the bridge of Grezin, and some passages necessary for his highness to enter Franche-Comté; but he was not by this cession to acquire a right to raise any tribute from these places, or to build any fort there, or to ferry troops over, but by the king's permission, and on condition that for this privilege of passing the bridge of Grezin the duke should pay

* M. De Thou, Matthieu, and La Chron. Sept. agree with this account, ib. an. 1601. See also the treaty in the Mem. de Nevers, tom. II. p. 775, &c.

1609,

France one hundred thousand crowns: That he should likewise resign to his majesty the citadel of Bourg, the bailiwick of Getx, Chateau-Dauphin and its dependencies, with all that could be comprehended in the province of Dauphiné on this side the Alps: That he should likewise renounce the property of Aus, Choufy, Valley, Pont d'Arley, Seisfel, Chana, and Pierre-Chatel, to the borders of Geneva; That the fortifications of Beche-Dauphin should be rased: That the king should on his side restore all the other forts he had taken which are not specified here, withdrawing the artillery and ammunition that were then placed there. The other articles related to criminals and prisoners of war that had fled on either side, church benefices, exchange of estates between private persons, &c. It was articulated for the duke of Nemours, part of whose estate lay in this country, that he should not be disturbed in the possession of it, neither for the part which he held of the king, nor for that which he held of his highness. The other clauses common to all treaties, I shall not mention.

Notwithstanding this treaty was signed by me for the king, by the legate for the pope, and the duke of Savoy's agents, yet the duke, influenced by the count of Fuentes, put off so long the entire conclusion of it, by his complaints and delays, that the king thought it necessary not to lay down his arms: he took post to Paris*, where he waited for the duke's determinations,

* " He departed, says Bassompierre, one night post from Lyons, in order to return to Paris; and embarking at Rouanne he landed at Briare; from whence he came to lie at Fontainebleau, and next day dined at Ville-neuve; and crossing the Seine below the Tuilleries, came in the evening to Verneuil (afterwards Senlis.) We continued

three days at Verneuil, and then came to Paris.—At length the queen arrived at Nemours; and the king, having rode post with sixty fresh horses, came and carried her to Fontainebleau, where after staying five or six days, she arrived at Paris, and was accommodated with apartments at the house of Gondy." Mem. de Bassompierre, tom. I. p. 89, 90.

1600.

In case there should be a necessity for his returning into Savoy, he had certain measures to take for the affairs within his kingdom, and in Paris especially, at a time when every place was filled with malecontents. He left the constable and Lesdiguières, till his return, with some good troops upon that frontier; and Villeroi and two or three other commissioners at Lyons, to conclude the business of the peace.

But his majesty found no occasion to return into these provinces. The duke of Savoy, after having long amused himself with expectations from the disaffected French lords, gave place to more prudent thoughts; and reflecting on what he had already lost by his obstinacy, he thought himself very happy to accept the treaty in the form already mentioned; accordingly the last formalities were added, and the peace was published at Paris and Turin with the usual ceremonies; however, the articles were not executed without many difficulties being raised by the duke of Savoy, which detained Villeroi at Lyons part of the following year: it was not till then that every thing was entirely agreed to; and Spain, who had taken great interest in the affair, even advised the duke of Savoy to comply with the articles of the treaty. On all these occasions Henry paid great deference to the pope. He granted all the delays which the duke of Savoy, by count Octavio Tassone, engaged the legate to demand; which was contrary to Villeroi's advice: but his majesty having in reality obtained all that he could demand, thought he ought not to observe too rigorously the manner it was yielded to him, nor hazard, for such a trifle, a renewal of the war. This produced as many advantages to the king as any war ended in a single campaign could possibly do. His majesty declared, that Bresse should not be comprehended in the district of Lyons, but that it should be re-united to Burgundy, and be under the jurisdiction of the court of aides of Paris.

The

1600.

The queen did not set out immediately after for Paris. She had brought with her her uncle Don John, a bastard of the family of Medicis, Virgilius Urfinus her cousin, who being brought up, while young, with her, had conceived hopes above his condition. Many more Italians of both sexes were in her train; amongst others, a young man named Conchini, and a girl called Leonora Galigai, who afterwards played a great part in France. I went to Paris eight days before the queen, to make preparations for the ceremony of her entry*, which was performed with great magnificence. The next day, the king brought the queen and the whole court to the arsenal to dine with me; the queen was attended by all her Italian ladies, who being pleased with the wine of Arbois, drank more of it than was necessary. I had some excellent white wine that was as clear as rock water: I ordered some decanters to be filled with it, and when the ladies asked for water to temper the burgundy, they were presented with this liquor. The king suspected by their gaiety that I had played them a trick. This winter was wholly taken up with parties of pleasure, on account of the king's marriage.

In Flanders, this year, the war broke out with great violence; prince Maurice of Orange gained a battle in the month of May against the archduke Albert, in which the † admiral of Castile, the

* It does not appear that this princess was complimented with the ceremony of a public entry into Paris. The citizens, says the *Chronologie Septennaire*, would have prepared a very magnificent one for her, and addressed the king for that purpose, but his majesty chose rather that the expence of the entry should be laid out on other things that were more necessary. It afterwards adds: Upon her arrival at the postern-gate of the suburb St. Marcel, the marquis de Rosny caused all the cannon of the arsenal to be fired three times.

She was carried in a litter along the moats of the city, and that day lodged at the suburb St. Germain, at Gondy's house, and the next at Zamet's, and after that at the Louvre. Ibid.

† This was the battle of Nieuport, that was fought in the month of July, wherein the Spaniards lost 8000 men. The prince of Orange was nevertheless obliged to raise the siege of Nieuport and retire to Holland. The greatest part of these foreign transactions are neither fully nor exactly related in our Memoirs; and I therefore think
man

man on whom he chiefly depended, was taken prisoner. He afterwards laid siege to Nieupoort, but was obliged to raise it. All I shall say of the war between the Emperor and the Grand Signior in Hungary, is, that the duke of Mercœur was made lieutenant-general there by his imperial majesty. I suppress a detail of the grandeur and magnificence of the secular* jubilee at Rome, and shall conclude the memoirs of this year with an incident that afforded matter for much serious reflection upon duels: Breauté having † killed his adversary in a very uncommon combat, was afterwards assassinated himself.

1600.

it unnecessary to give an account of them in the notes, but rather refer the reader to the Memoirs and Histories of that time. In like manner consult the general and particular accounts of the military expeditions between the armies of the emperor and the Grand Signior, which are mentioned here.

* It was said, that 300,000 French, men and women, went to Rome, to obtain the indulgence of the jubilee; concerning which, see the ceremonies in La Septennaire, an. 1600, and other Memoirs of that time.

† Charles de Breauté, a French gentleman of Caux, captain of a

troop of horse in the service of the States; his antagonist was a Flemish soldier, lieutenant of a company under the governor of Boissleduc, with whom he fought a singular kind of combat, of twenty French against the same number of Flemish; he had the advantage in the first encounter, in which he killed his antagonist, but was made prisoner in the second, and put to death by order of the governor of Boissleduc. He was one, says the author of the Chronologie Septennaire, that eagerly sought after occasions of duelling, for which reason he had been obliged to quit the court of France.

MEMOIRS

OF

SULLY.

BOOK XII.

1601.

IN the foregoing book I finished the last military narration that will be found in these Memoirs, in which at least France was concerned. The life of Henry the great, hitherto wholly passed amidst the tumult of arms, will in the sequel exhibit only the actions of a pacific king, and the father of a family. The manner in which the campaign in Savoy had been conducted and terminated, leaving no room to fear that the peace would be again infringed by these antient enemies of the monarchy, or that it would not subsist as long as his majesty pleased, I resumed, by his orders, and under his inspection, those schemes with regard to the finances that the war had suspended, and were now to meet with no more interruption. After the representation I have already given of the state of affairs within the kingdom, it would be injurious to consider the life which the prince and myself now embraced as idle and inactive: if it is less noisy and tumultuous, it is probably more laborious. Behold me therefore again shut up in my closet, where I applied myself with the utmost attention to the examination of all the abuses that still remained to be rooted

rooted out of the chamber of accounts *; the offices of the finances, the crown lands, the aids, the subsidies, the equivalents, the five large farms, the tenths, and all the rest. I laboured at once for the present and the future, by taking such measures, that the method I established in the direction of every part of the finances should not be afterwards subject to any alterations. I considered of means to enrich the king without impoverishing his subjects, to pay his debts, repair his palaces; and strove, with still more assiduity, to complete the art of fortifying his cities, than that of attacking and defending them; and to make provision of arms and ammunition. I extended my cares to the repairing and renewing public works, such as roads, bridges, keys of rivers, and other buildings, which reflect no less honour upon the sovereign than the splendor of his own palaces, and are of general utility: for which purpose I began to look into the application that had been made of the money granted for those uses to the cities and corporations, or rather into the frauds that had been used in the management of these funds.

The scheme of drawing up an account of every part of the finances, under the title of a general state, which should lay down their nature uniformly and clearly, seemed always so happy a thought, and so proper to bring them to the utmost exactness, that wherever this method was practicable I made use of it. On the first day of this year, when I presented to the king the gold and silver medals, as usual, I give him at the same time five of these general states, each of which related to one or other of my employments, bound up in one volume very neatly. In the first, which was of the greatest importance, because I there gave an account of all that concerned myself as superintendant, was set down

* As to these reformati^ons, consult likewise Matthieu, tom. II. liv. iii. p. 444.

1601. on one side, all the money that was raised in France by the king from every tax whatever; on the other, all that was to be deducted for the charge of collection, and consequently all that was to be brought clear into his majesty's coffers. I cannot persuade myself that this method was never thought of by any one since the finances were subject to some regulation; but interest alone prevented the execution of it. However that may be, I shall always insist upon it, that without this guide there is no proceeding without mistakes or roguery.

The second of these states was drawn up merely for the use of the keeper of the royal treasury; here was set down, whence and upon what account he received all the king's money that passed through his hands during the year of his office, and how much he was at liberty to disburse out of the whole sum, and for what purposes. The third was compiled for the use of the master of the ordnance, containing an exact account of money received and expended; with a true inventory of all that relates to the artillery; the number and sorts of cannon, and of other arms, the quantity of instruments of war, and provisions of victual, laid up in different places, or magazines; the state of the arsenals and fortified places, and other observations of the same fort. The fourth related to the chief surveyor of the roads, and gave an account of all the money disbursed or to be disbursed for the repair of every thing under his charge, whether it was to be done at the expence of the king or of the provinces. And, to conclude, the fifth contained a catalogue of cities and castles, particularly those on the frontiers, that required any money to be laid out upon them; with a kind of rough draught of the works necessary at each place, formed with due regard to their natural situation and present state.

The king, upon my representation, reformed many abuses with respect to money, which had caused a decay of commerce, of which money is the chief in-

instrument; the first was the practice which was then allowed, of putting money to interest at eight, or even at ten *per Cent.* * a practice of equal mischief to the nobility and the people; to the nobility, because they, being forbidden to engage in trade, have no other riches but the produce of their grounds, of which the price was brought down by high interest; to the people, because, by putting out money to interest, they made as great profit by sitting still as by labour, and thereby kept immense sums of money useless to the public, which, without that method of growing rich, they would have improved by some means advantageous to the commonwealth. The interest of eight *per Cent.* was abolished, and six *per Cent.* allowed in its stead.

The coin of different countries was till this time current in France, and passed in commerce equally with that of our own sovereign. A prohibition was issued, by which all money was put down but the coin of France †, that of Spain only excepted, which would have been too much missed in commerce had it been at once forbidden. But it was more necessary to rid ourselves of the merchandise of our neighbours than of their money, for the whole kingdom was filled with their manufactures;

* It is thus that a prince, in our times, remarkable for his abilities and superior skill in politics, has judged: being firmly persuaded, that the state would receive great advantages in every respect from a regulation that would oblige monied men to betake themselves to commerce and agriculture, which are infinitely preferable to the bare and dead produce of rents.

† It is true, that the species of foreign gold and silver coin ought not to pass current and be confounded with that of the prince in interior commerce, and in payments made between individuals; but is it not evident, that the more such coin abounds among our own

money, the more flourishing will our commerce be? The historian Matthieu observes, tom. II. l. iii. p. 446. that this prohibition made the commerce in France fall almost entirely; and the duke of Sully himself agrees, a little lower, that he was obliged to have recourse to other means to retrieve it. We will examine this question with him, when he comes to handle it, in the following book. As to the prohibition of using gold and silver in cloaths and household furniture, we shall also have occasion, in the sequel, to give our opinion on the principles he establishes with regard to luxury.

1601. and it is incredible how much mischief was done by foreign stuffs, particularly those of gold and silver. The importation of these, and of all others, was forbidden under severe penalties: and because France had no means of supplying herself with them out of her own stock, we had recourse to the true remedy, which is, to do without them; the use of all stuffs wrought with gold and silver being forbidden by an edict*.

All these declarations tended to introduce one, by which it was forbidden to carry any species of money out of the kingdom, under the penalty of a confiscation of all that should be intercepted in the carriage, and likewise of all the estates of the offenders, as well those that favoured as those that were guilty of the infringement of this law. The king gave a public proof how much he had this affair at heart, by the oath he made, not to grant any pardon for this sort of misdemeanors; and even to hold all those suspected that should dare to solicit him to the contrary: yet all this could only oblige those persons that carried on such practices to conceal them more carefully. I was of opinion, that one example would be more efficacious in correcting this obstinate evil than all the threats that had been published against it. I was not ignorant that a great many very considerable persons, and even amongst the courtiers themselves, made a fund out of this pernicious traffic, either by suffering this money to pass under their names, or by selling, at a high price, the authority which enabled them to correspond with the foreigners, and secured the privileges of passage. I thought it most prudent to apply myself to those who were employed by them for these correspondences, and promised them

* He shewed, by his example, how to retrench the superfluity of dress, for he commonly went clad in a coat of grey cloth, with only a pourpoint of sattin or taffety, without any indented edgings, lace,

or embroidery: he commended such as dressed in that plain fashion, and ridiculed others, who carried, said he, their windmills and their old woods on their backs. Peref. part iii.

that,

that, as a recompence for their discovery, they should have the fourth part of those sums that were seized by their informations; for the king having made over these confiscations to me, I had a right to dispose of them. By these means I was well served. 1601.

A month was scarce elapsed, when I received notice from an inconsiderable man, the authors not being willing to make themselves known, that there were two hundred thousand crowns in gold collecting to send abroad, which was to be sent at two different times, and that the first carriage would be much less than the second. After having taken all the necessary precautions, this sum appearing rather too considerable for me, I thought myself obliged to mention it to the king, who made this qualification in the right he had given me, that if the sum did not exceed ten thousand crowns, I might appropriate it to myself, but that the overplus should be his: "Which will come, said he, very seasonably, having had some loss at play that I durst not tell you of, nor make up with my own money." I was not mercenary enough to wait for the profits of the second carriage. I ordered the first to be dogged, and with such vigilance, that it was stopped half a league beyond the territories of France. It could not be done in the kingdom, though but a quarter of a league from the frontier, without furnishing the offenders with a pretext for getting it released. There was found in pistoles, double pistoles, and crowns of the sun, to the amount of eight and forty thousand crowns, which had been concealed in some bales of common goods for exportation. The king's resolution on this article was so well known, that the conductors named no person as proprietor of it; and notwithstanding all the noise this seizure made at court, it was disavowed by every one; and the sum was, by his majesty, divided in this manner: seventy-two thousand livres he reserved for himself, five and twenty thousand he ordered should be given to the informer, and the remaining forty-seven thou-

1601. sand he left to me ; promising me, that however large any future capture might be, he would take no part of it from me. But after this, no more money was attempted to be carried out of the kingdom; this example had given a general dislike to so ruinous a traffic.

Those that composed the chamber of justice * which was erected against the contractors, treasurers, receivers, and others who had been guilty of misdemeanors in their offices, were likely, in appearance, to exercise far greater severities. It was my advice, that these offenders should not only be obliged to refund, but that those who were convicted of embezzling the public treasure should be corporally punished. Money, however, the possession of which covers all crimes it is the cause of, excepted this from the just rigor of the law †. I would, were it possible, transfuse into the breasts of my countrymen some part of that indignation that fills mine, against so pernicious an abuse, and all that contempt which I feel for those that owe their elevation to it. If we consider as a slight matter, the despicable light we appear in to our neighbours by this shameful custom (for none strikes more directly at the honour of the nation) we cannot conceal from ourselves the evils it has given rise to ; nothing has contributed more towards perverting our ideas of probity, candor, and disinterestedness, or to turn

* Otherwise called the royal chamber : it consisted of a president of the parliament of Paris, two counsellors, two masters of request, a president and four counsellors of the chamber of accounts, a president and three counsellors of the court of aids, and one of the general advocates of the parliament, &c. Commissioners were sent into the provinces, to give them informations of such as were guilty of any malversations.

† The duke of Sully seems to me to reason justly, when, in suppos-

ing the utility of the chambers of justice, he requires, that they should not confine their proceedings to pecuniary mulcts only, but join to these corporal punishments. And he seems to me to have still greater reason, when, in the sequel, he advises to suppress this method as absolutely useless ; and entirely abolish, in France, the usage of compositions in farming the finances : and this is likewise the opinion of cardinal Richlieu. Testament Polit, part I. ch. iv. § 5.

those virtues into ridicule; nothing has more strengthened that fatal propensity to luxury, which is natural to all men, but is with us become a second nature, by that peculiarity of temper which makes us fasten eagerly upon every thing that can gratify our passions; and nothing in particular has so greatly degraded the French nobility, as the rapid and dazzling fortunes of contractors and other men of business, by that opinion which they have circulated every where, and which is indeed but too well grounded, that in France this is almost the only method of arriving at the highest honours, and first employments of the state, in the possession of which all is forgot, and to the attainment all is permitted.

To go to the source, military virtue is almost the only quality by which true nobility can, in France, be obtained, preserved, or dignified: and in this practice there will be found no prejudice or empty opinion, if it be considered, that precedence must naturally be granted to that rank, by which all other classes of the community are preserved and supported in that security without which there can be no property: but this state of life is not the way to a great fortune; this simplicity and separation from lucrative purposes shew the antiquity and purity of the first institution. By bravery nothing but honours could be got, because in those times honour was the only reward of glorious actions: in later days, since the notions of mankind are changed, and every thing is rated by the money which it brings, this generous body of nobility is brought in comparison with the managers of the revenue, the officers of justice, and the drudges of business. But this comparison terminates in a universal agreement, to pay to these gatherers of money that respect which must always be shewn to those who are possessed of power, and are, in fact, our superiors, an advantage which the former have lost*. And, indeed, how should it be

* The same cardinal Richelieu poses a remedy for it, according to the duke of Sully's scheme.

1601. otherwise, when we see the nobility of the same mind, with regard to this point, as the meanest of the people, and making no scruple to mingle the most illustrious blood in a shameful alliance with a dirty pedlar, who knows nothing but the change, his shop, his counter, and his knavery? This abuse is necessarily productive of two others, confusion of ranks, and degeneracy of families; which last is better proved by experience than argument. We need only take a view of that great number of mongrel gentry with which the court and city is filled, and we shall find them wholly destitute of the plain and manly virtue of their ancestors: no depth of thought, no solidity of judgment, rash, inconsiderate, a strong passion for play, a natural propensity to dissoluteness, a solicitude for dress, and vitiated taste in every kind of luxury; that one would imagine they thought to exceed even the women in the effeminacy of their manners: yet these people engage in the army, but with such dispositions, to which is often added a secret contempt for the profession they embrace, what can be expected from them? This subversion of all order is indeed to be lamented, but is inevitable, while that profession, which has only glory for its object, is not exalted to the highest rank, and dignified with the chiefest honours, which, for that purpose, ought to be taken from the upstarts of fortune; and since the infamy which we should find these creatures of chance stained with, if we took pains to examine them, is not sufficient to draw our contempt, it is necessary they should be branded

"Gentlemen, says he, cannot be promoted to places of trust and dignity, but at the expence of their ruin; for at present all sorts of people are admitted to them through the infamous traffic carried on by means of money. For the future, all persons should be excluded from those posts, but those that have the good fortune to be of noble

"birth." This minister concludes, in another place, after M. de Sully, "That the means of continuing the nobility in that purity of manners which they derive from their ancestors (these are his words) is to retrench that luxury and intolerable expence which have been gradually introduced." Part I. ch. iii. § 1.

with

with public marks of disgrace, to signify the rank they ought to hold.

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The king was convinced by the justness of this reasoning. However, in this chamber of justice, the same thing happened that generally does: the little rogues paid for all the rest; the principal delinquents found their security in that very metal for which they were prosecuted; they made use of a small part of it in presents, which saved the other. This qualifying would not have prevailed with the king had it been employed directly; but it found acceptance with the ladies of the court, and even with the queen herself; they gained the constable, Bouillon, Bellegarde, Roquelaure, Souvré, Frontenac, and some others, who, though not of this high class, knew as well how to work upon the king's inclinations; such were Zamet, La Varenne, Gondy, Boneuil, Conchini, and many more of that sort. The complaisance of this prince for all those whom he suffered to live in some degree of familiarity with him, and especially for ladies, destroyed all his wise resolutions, so that the storm fell only upon those that had reason to reproach themselves with not having yet stolen enough to put their thefts in security. The retrenching of part of those officers of all ranks, with which the bar and the finances abounded, and which was done at this time, was looked upon as the work of the chamber of justice. The great number of those officers, as well as their extreme licentiousness, are indubitable testimonies of the calamities that are introduced into a state, and the forerunners of its ruin.

In May the king and queen had the devotion to celebrate the jubilee at Orleans. I attended their majesties as far as half a league beyond Fontainebleau, from whence they proceeded that evening to Puiseaux. I took advantage of this little vacation, to visit the lands of Baugy, which had been just awarded to me by a decree, for the great sums which were due to me from these lands, and upon which I began

1691. began to build immediately with the confiscated money I have lately mentioned. I was stopped within two leagues from the place where I intended to lie, by a courier from his majesty, who called out to me while I was yet a great way before him. He brought me a letter from the king which contained only these few words. "I gave you six days for your journey to Baugy, but I have received letters of great consequence from Buzenval, which I want to shew you; you will oblige me if you will come and lie to-night here at Puiseaux, whither you need bring no necessaries. I have given orders for your lodging, and sent thither my hunting bed, and have ordered Coquet to get your supper ready, and your breakfast in the morning, for I will detain you no longer. Adieu, my beloved friend."

I wished my wife, who accompanied me, a good night, and, taking with me only two gentlemen, a page, and a valet de chambre, and one groom, I turned back to Puiseaux, where I found the king, who was amusing himself with seeing the youth of his train wrestle and leap in the court-yard of the priory. As soon as he saw me, he called Pasquier, who had been sent to him by Villeroi with Buzenval's letters, which informed the king that prince Maurice had taken the field with his army, which he had increased with garrisons drawn out of their quarters, and escorted by two thousand waggons: that, with this army, he intended (as Buzenval had learned from the prince of Orange's officers, and from the prince himself) to cross Brabant, the country of Liege, Hainault, and Artois, to gain by it the rivers along the frontiers of France, from whence he expected assistance, and bring the war to the neighbourhood of Gravelines, Berque-Saint-Vinox, Dunkirk, and Nieuport; that the archduke, greatly inferior to the prince of Orange, not having yet received the troops which he expected from Italy and Germany, beheld those preparations with astonishment, and durst not oppose his march, but that he contented himself with
being

being near him, that he might oblige him to keep in a narrow compass, and that while he obstructed him he might be himself near the place where he perceived the storm would fall; that, finding this step, which had been communicated to him, of great importance, he thought it was necessary to inform the king of it. 1601.

The knowledge I had of the Low Countries made this design of the prince of Orange appear to me so dangerous, that I thought it likely to draw upon him a total defeat. He would be obliged to march a great way within view of the enemy and upon their frontiers, through countries so full of woods, hedges, and hollow ways, particularly in Liégeois, that I thought them impassable for such a number of waggons; and the king was of the same opinion. After we had conferred together a long time, he resolved to send prince Maurice his sentiments of it, and I resumed my route to Baugy, in which I visited the lands of Sully, that I had a design of purchasing, and did so accordingly the following year. The king continued his pilgrimage to Orleans, and laid there the first stone for the rebuilding the church of the Holy Cross: he afterwards returned to Paris, to which place I had come three days before his majesty.

Henry's letter changed the design of Nassau; he besieged Rhimberg, and took it on the tenth of June. The archduke Albert, in revenge, invested Ostend on * the fifth of July. Maurice, on his side, laid siege to Bolduc, either to force the archduke to abandon his enterprize, or to indemnify himself by the reduction of this place, which was looked upon to be the most important fortress in Brabant. I was still of opinion that he would do neither; and when the king sent for me to hear my sentiments of it in

* It will be often mentioned; years; but for a minute detail of this siege, in which many brave actions were performed on both sides, having lasted above three them consult M. De Thou, Le Sep-tennaire, and other historians.

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the presence of the courtiers who were by when the packet which brought the news was opened, and who all spoke differently of it, I said that, although I was very young when I had visited Bolduc, I had nevertheless preserved the remembrance of the place, and that, not to mention its situation, which rendered the siege of it a work of immense labour, it seemed to me impossible, considering the extent of the place and the great number of its citizens, to surround it in such a manner as to hinder any one from going in or out, at least without an army of twenty five thousand men. In effect, the prince of Orange failed in his attempt upon Bolduc: but all this did not happen till November.

The war breaking out so near our frontiers, made Henry resolve to go to Calais, as if he had no other design but to visit that country. Although he always suspected the Spaniards, he was not apprehensive, in the present state of the affairs of that crown, that they would be prevailed on to break the peace: but he was not displeased at having an opportunity to give them a little uneasiness, in revenge for the daily occasions of discontent which he received from them. They acted, indeed, in a manner sufficient to have obliged his majesty to do something more, had not policy prevailed over resentment. After many fruitless attempts to break the alliance between the Swiss cantons and France, and to hinder the pope from acting as arbitrator in the dispute about the marquissate of Saluces, because his holiness could not dispense with himself from giving judgment against the duke of Savoy, they had sent troops to that prince in the last campaign, under the command of the count de Fuentes. Their continued intrigues with marechal Biron, Bouillon, D'Auvergne, the prince of Joinville, were publicly known. Biron himself had confessed it to his majesty: and lastly, the king, at his return from Orleans, received certain intelligence of their practices with the cities of Metz, Marseilles, and Bayonne,

At

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At all this his majesty dissembled his displeasure; but nothing provoked him against that crown so much, as the outrage * which La Rochepot, our ambassador at Madrid, his nephew, and his whole train had received from that court. La Rochepot gave an account of it in his letters. "I swear by heaven," said Henry transported with rage, "that, if I can but once see my affairs in order, and get a sufficient supply of money, and whatever else is necessary, I will make so furious a war upon them, that they shall repent of having obliged me to take up arms." However, he still shut his eyes upon so glaring a violation of the rights of nations, but it was not without doing great violence to his inclinations. "I see plainly," said this prince to me sometimes, "that through emulation, jealousy, and interest of state, France and Spain can never be on friendly terms with each other, and that a proper security against that crown must have some other foundation than words." He was sufficiently convinced of the error in Villeroi and Sillery's policy, who often, in his presence, maintained against me, that a strict union with Spain was not only neither impossible nor dangerous for France, but likewise the most reasonable system of politics that ought to be embraced. To their arguments I opposed that competition so natural to these two crowns, the opposition of their interests, and the remembrance of so many recent injuries; and I concluded that, with a neighbour so artful and unjust, the necessary measures to be taken were to hold them always suspected,

* Antony de Silly, count de la Rochepot. His nephew happening to bathe himself with some French gentlemen, was insulted by some Spaniards, who flung his cloaths, and those of his companions, into the river. These revenged themselves for the affront by killing and wounding some of the Spaniards; those that fled soon after returned to force open the ambassador's

house, and thence dragged his nephew to prison, with others of his associates that had taken shelter there. This difference was compromised by the pope, who caused the prisoners to be sent to him to Rome, and delivered them to the count de Bethune, brother to M. de Sully, ambassador of France at that court. See the abovementioned historians for the year 1601.

1601. and to be always prepared for defence. The last news that came from Madrid gave me, for this time, the advantage over my opponents, at least in the king's opinion, who hesitated no longer about going to Ostend, after he had dismissed two celebrated embassies, which he received about this time.

One of these embassies was from the grand seignor, who, knowing that the sophy of Persia his enemy had sent a solemn deputation to the pope, the emperor, and the king of Spain, without taking any notice of the king of France, against whom he seemed to make an overture of his assistance at the same time that he asked for theirs, he was returning one act for another. His highness, on this occasion, made use of his physician, who * was a christian, and invested him with the dignity of his ambassador. The terms in which this haughty potentate expressed himself, with regard to the French †, discovered a distinction and respect, of which there are few examples; he set a higher value, he said, upon the friendship and arms of the French, than of all the other christian nations together; and that although they should all unite with Persia against him, he should think himself in a condition to despise their attempts, as soon as he had secured the alliance and assistance of a king, whose superiority over his neighbours, as well as his great personal qualities, he appeared not to be ignorant of. The Turkish ambassador presented his majesty with several rich presents, and gave me two scymetars of exquisite workmanship, which I keep with great care.

* Bartholemew Cœur, a renegade of Marseilles. He demanded of the king that the duke of Mercœur should be recalled from Hungary, because, among the prophecies which the Turks believe, there is one, they say, that the French shall drive the Turks out of Europe.

† To the most glorious, most magnanimous and most illustrious

prince of the faith of Jesus . . . the composer of the differences that happen between christian potentates, prince of grandeur, majesty and opulence, and the glorious leader of the greatest subjects, Henry the IVth, emperor of France; such were the titles which his highness gave the king. MSS. de la Biblioth. de Roi, vol. 9592.

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The other ambaffador was from the republic of Venice. This ftate had been a long time, by a particular alliance often renewed, and by their common intereft, united with France againft the Spanifh power: it had been amongft the firft in complimenting his moft chriftian majefty upon his marriage and the peace, by the fieurs Gradenigo and Delfin, the laft of whom was likewise in this embaffy. Henry was defirous that thefe ambaffadors fhould be received with the utmoft diftinction in Paris. He ordered them to be ferved with his own plate, and loaded them with prefents of equal value with thofe he gave the firft. The letters he then wrote to me turned almoft wholly upon this head, for he was then at Fontainebleau with the queen, who was far advanced in her pregnancy, upon which account the king could not come immediately to Paris, and ftill lefs the queen who had fo great a concern in this embaffy. His majefty fhewed fo much refpect for the Venetian ambaffadors, as not to fuffer them to wait for his return to Paris, but let them know that he would receive them at Fontainebleau, to which place his coaches and equipages attended them.

The archdukes could not fail to fufpect, that the king, by marching towards Calais, would endeavour to obftruct their defigns upon Oftend, by way of reprisal for the ill treatment La Rochepot had received. In order to difcover the purport of this journey, they deputed to him the count of Solre in the quality of ambaffador, under a pretence of making him the fame compliments on the queen's pregnancy which he received from all parts; enjoining this ambaffador to infinuate a complaint of his journey, by which Solre gave a fair opportunity to the king, who, inftead of fatisfying him as to the occafion of his complaints, made, in his turn, very heavy ones againft Spain, affuring him however, but in a general manner, that he would not be the firft to come to a rupture, provided that the Spaniards did not force him to it by continuing their unfair

1601. proceedings. With this promise the ambassador pretended to be satisfied.

The queen of England hearing the king was at Calais, thought it a favourable opportunity to satisfy her impatience of seeing and embracing her best friend. Henry was not less desirous of this interview, that he might confer with the queen upon the affairs of Europe in general, as well as on their own in particular, especially those which had been just hinted to him by the English and Dutch ambassadors when he was at Nantz. Elizabeth first wrote him a letter equally polite and full of offers of service; she afterwards made him the usual compliments, and repeated those assurances by the lord Edmond, whom she dispatched to Calais, till she herself could arrive at Dover, from whence she sent the lord Sidney with other letters.

Henry resolving not to be outdone in complaisance, answered these advances in a manner that shewed at once his respect for the sex of Elizabeth, and his esteem and admiration of her character. This intercourse continued a long time, to the great mortification of the Spaniards, whose jealousy was strongly excited by proximity and close correspondence. Of all the letters wrote by these two sovereigns on this occasion, I am possessed only of that in which Elizabeth informs the king of those obstacles that prevented her conferring with him in person, lamenting the unhappiness of princes, who, contrary to their inclinations, were slaves to forms, and fettered by circumspection. This letter*, because it

* This letter, and this whole relation of the duke of Sully's concerning Henry the IVth's journey to Calais, and Elizabeth's to Dover, appear sufficient, without any other reflections, to shew the error of all those various judgments current at that time, and which have been mentioned by different historians concerning these two potentates. It was said Elizabeth proposed to Henry, either that he should come to Dover, or at least confer with her in a vessel half way between these two towns; and that this proposal concealed a snare in which Elizabeth hoped to entrap Henry, by seizing upon his person in the interview, and keeping him prisoner till he restored Calais, and that Henry excused himself from complying with her request, only

was the occasion of the voyage I made to this princess, I have kept in my hands; in it she tells her most dear and well beloved brother (for so she called the king of France) that her concern at not being able to see him was so much the greater, as she had something to communicate to him which she durst not confide to any other person or commit to paper, and yet that she was upon the point of returning to London. 1601.

The king's curiosity was strongly excited by these last words; in vain did he torture his imagination to guess their purport. Secretary Feret being sent by him to fetch me, "I have just now received letters," said he to me, "from my good sister the queen of England, whom you admire so greatly; they are fuller of civilities than ever: see if you will have more success than I have had in discovering her meaning." I agreed with Henry that it must be something of great consequence which induced her to express herself in this manner; it was resolved, therefore, that I should embark the next day for Dover, as if with no other design than to take advantage of the shortness of the passage to make a tour to London, which would give me an opportunity of seeing what step the queen would take upon my arrival, neither the king nor I doubting but that she would be immediately informed of it. I acquainted no one with my intended passage, but such of my domestics as were to attend me, and of these I took but a very small number.

because he suspected the design; others say, because his fears of the sea were so great, that he durst not venture into a vessel. No one suspected the true motive for proposing this interview, which was the occasion of all these letters that passed between them, and caused the duke of Sully to make the secret voyage to Dover, of which he here gives an account. Siri, on this occasion, builds upon the resentment which he supposes Elizabeth always preserved, both of the peace of Vervins and the surrender of Ca-

lais, as well as her fear lest Henry should aggrandise himself too much, and on the jealousy which the English entertained of the French. *Mem. Recond. vol. I. p. 130, 150, &c.* But this writer, so well acquainted with foreign negotiations, especially those of Italy and Spain, is not right, neither in the facts nor the opinions which he produces concerning the interior of our court and councils under the reign of Henry the IVth. He knew neither this prince nor the duke of Sully.

1601.

I embarked early in the morning, and reached Dover about ten o'clock, where, among the crowd of those who embarked and disembarked, I was immediately discovered by the lord Sidney, who five or six days before had seen me at Calais : with him were Cobham, Raleigh, and Griffin, and they were soon after joined by the earls of Devonshire and Pembroke. Sidney embraced me, and asked me if I was come to see the queen ; I told him I was not, and even assured him that the king knew nothing of my voyage : I likewise entreated him not to mention it to the queen, for not having had any intention of paying my respects to her I had no letter to present, my design being only to make a short tour incognito to London. These gentlemen replied smiling, that I had taken a useless precaution, for that probably the guardship had already given a signal of my arrival, and that I might quickly expect to see a messenger from the queen, who would not suffer me to pass in this manner, having but three days ago spoke of me publicly and in very obliging terms. I affected to be extremely concerned at this unlucky accident, but to hope nevertheless, that I might still pass undiscovered, provided that these gentlemen would be secret as to the place where I was to lodge ; from whence, I assured them, I would immediately depart as soon as I had taken a little refreshment : saying this I left them abruptly, and had but just entered my apartment, and spoke a few words to my people, when I felt somebody embrace me from behind, who told me, that he arrested me as a prisoner to the queen. This was the captain of her guards, whose embrace I returned, and replied smiling, that I should esteem such imprisonment a great honour.

His orders were to conduct me directly to the queen ; I therefore followed him. " It is well, M. de Rosny," said this princess to me as soon as I appeared. " And do you break our fences thus " and pass on without coming to see me ? I am " greatly surprised at it, for I thought you bore me

“ more affection than any of my servants; and I am
 “ persuaded that I have given you no cause to change
 “ those sentiments.” I replied in few words; but
 such as so gracious a reception required. After
 which I began, without any disguise, to entertain
 her with those sentiments the king my master had
 for her. “ To give you a proof,” replied she; “ that
 “ I believe all you have told me of the goodwill of
 “ the king my brother, and of your own, I will
 “ discourse with you on the subject of the last letter
 “ I wrote to him; though perhaps you have seen
 “ it, for Stafford (that is the name of the lord Sid-
 “ ney) and Edmund tell me, that the king conceals
 “ few of his secrets from you.” She then drew me
 aside, that she might speak to me with the greatest
 freedom, on the present state of affairs in Europe;
 and this she did with such strength and clearness,
 beginning from the treaty of Vervins, that I was
 convinced this great queen was truly worthy of that
 high reputation she had acquired in Europe. She
 entered into this detail, only to shew me how neces-
 sary it was that the king of France should, in con-
 cert with her, begin to execute those great designs
 which they both meditated against the house of Au-
 stria. The necessity of this she founded upon the
 accessions this house was daily seen to make: she re-
 peated to me all that had passed on this subject in
 1598, between the king and the English and Dutch
 ambassadors, and asked me if this prince did not still
 continue to have the same sentiments, and why he
 so long delayed to begin the enterprize.

To these questions of queen Elizabeth, I answered,
 That his most christian majesty still continued to
 think of that affair as he always had done: that the
 men and money he was raising, and the other war-
 like preparations he was making, were destined to
 no other purpose than the execution of the concerted
 plan; but that in France things were far from being
 in such a state, as to enable him to undertake the
 destruction of a power so solidly established as that

1601. of the Austrian princes. This I proved, by the extraordinary expences Henry had been at since the peace of Vervins, as well for the general necessities of his kingdom, as to restrain the attempts of the seditious, and to carry on the war which he had just ended with Savoy. I did not dissemble with this princess the opinion I had always entertained of this enterprize, which is, that though England and the United Provinces should use their utmost endeavours to reduce the house of Austria, unless they were assisted by all the forces of the French monarchy, and on whom, for many reasons, the chief weight of this war must fall, the house of Austria, by uniting the forces of its two branches, might, without any difficulty, not only support itself against them, but even render the balance equal; it would therefore be useless, and even an imprudent attempt, to endeavour to sap the foundations of so formidable a power, by the same means only that serve merely to keep upon the defensive with it: and it would be indispensably necessary to defer the attempt for some years, during which, France would acquire all she now wanted, to enable her to strike more effectually the blow that was preparing for the common enemy; and would, in conjunction with her allies, endeavour to engage the neighbouring princes and states in their design, the princes of Germany especially, who were more immediately threatened by the tyranny of the house of Austria.

It was easy for the queen of England to comprehend, by the manner in which I expressed myself, that these were not so much my own as Henry's sentiments which I communicated to her, and she gave me to understand as much, by confessing, that they appeared so just and reasonable to her, that she could not avoid adopting them: adding only, that there was one point on which all the parties could not be too soon agreed, which was, that the ultimate view of the intended combination being to confine the power of the house of Austria within just bounds,

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it would be necessary that each of the allies should proportion all his desires or expectations which he might conceive in consequence of the event, as that none of them might be capable of giving umbrage to the rest: supposing, for example, that Spain should be deprived of the Low Countries, neither the whole nor any part of this state was to be coveted, either by the king of France, or the king of Scotland, who would one day become so of Great Britain, nor yet by the kings of Sweden and Denmark, already sufficiently powerful by sea and land to make themselves respected by the other allies; and that the same conduct ought to be observed with regard to all the other spoils that might be taken from the house of Austria by those princes whose dominions should happen to be nearest to the conquered countries; "For if my brother, the king of France, said she, should think of making himself proprietor, or even only fœdal lord of the United Provinces, I should never consent to it, but entertain a most violent jealousy of him; nor should I blame him, if, giving him the same occasion, he should have the same fears of me."

These were not the only reflections made by the queen of England; she said many other things, which appeared to me so just and sensible, that I was filled with astonishment and admiration. It is not unusual to behold princes form great designs; their sphere of action so forcibly inclines them to this, that it is only necessary to warn them of the extreme, which is, the projecting what their powers are so little proportioned to perform, that they scarce ever find themselves able to execute the half of what they proposed; but to be able to distinguish and form only such as are reasonable; wisely to regulate the conduct of them; to foresee and guard against all obstacles in such a manner, that when they happen, nothing more will be necessary, than to apply the remedies prepared long before; this is what few princes are capable of.

1601. ury, vanity, nay, even fear and indolence, daily produce schemes, to execute which there is not the least possibility. Another cause of surprize to me, was, that Elizabeth and Henry, having never conferred together on their political project, should agree so exactly in all their ideas, as not to differ even in the most minute particulars.

The queen observing my eyes were attentively fixed on her without speaking, imagined she had expressed herself so confusedly in something she had said, that I was unable to comprehend her meaning. But when I ingenuously confessed to her the true cause of my silence and surprise, she then, without scruple, entered into the most minute parts of the design: but as I shall have an ample occasion to treat of this, in relating the great schemes which were prevented by the untimely death of Henry IV. I shall not trouble the reader with useless repetitions; but in this place just shew the five principal points to which her majesty reduced so extensive a scheme, as from the sequel of these Memoirs this will appear to have been. The first was, to restore Germany to its antient liberty, in respect to the election of its emperors, and the nomination of a king of the Romans. The second, to render the United Provinces absolutely independent of Spain; and to form them into a republic, by annexing to them, if necessary, some provinces dismembered from Germany. The third, to do the same in regard to Switzerland, by incorporating with it some of the adjacent provinces, particularly Alsace and Franche-Compté. The fourth, to divide all christendom into a certain number of powers, as equal as may be. The fifth, to reduce all the various religions in it under those three which should appear to be most numerous and considerable in Europe.

Our conference was very long: I cannot bestow praises upon the queen of England that would be equal to the merit which I discovered in her in this short time, both as to the qualities of the heart and the

the understanding. I gave an exact relation of every thing that passed between us to the king, who very highly approved all she had said to me. Their majesties corresponded by letters, during the rest of the time they stayed at Dover and Calais. All preliminaries were agreed on; measures were taken even on the grand object of the design, but with such secrecy, that the whole of this affair remained to the death of the king, and even much longer, among the number of those on which only various and uncertain conjectures are formed. 1601.

The king did not return to Paris till he had carefully examined all the fortresses upon his frontier, and provided for their security: in every other respect, he appeared an indifferent spectator of the quarrel between the Spaniards and the Flemish; and all he did in favour of Ostend, the siege of which was still continued, was, not to hinder some French from engaging in the service of the prince of Orange, in which several of them lost their lives; amongst these, the death of young * Chatillon-Coligny, whose head was shot off by a cannon-ball before Ostend, deserved to be particularly lamented. The king, when he was told it, said publicly, that France had lost a man of great merit: myself, in particular, was sensibly afflicted at his death. Coligny, at an early age, had already united almost all the qualities that form a soldier; valor, moderation, prudence, judgment, and the art of making himself equally beloved by the soldier and officer.

But Coligny was a protestant; and the jealousy of the courtiers soon converted all these virtues into so many crimes, in the opinion of the king; they told his majesty, that Coligny already aspired to the distinction of being head of the protestants, both

* Henry de Coligny, lord of Chatillon Coligny came originally from Savoy, of a very noble and antient lineage, as he says, and who he carried to the assistance of Ostend were formerly sovereign princes, a regiment of 800 French. According to Brantome, the house of and very powerful. Tom. III. p. 173.

1601.

within and without the kingdom, to which he was solicited by the duke of Bouillon; that he desired nothing with so much ardour as to equal, or even to surpass, the actions of his father and grandfather; and had been heard to declare, that he should not regret the loss of life, if he had the satisfaction to lose it at the head of an army, fighting for the preservation of his friends. His affection for the soldiers was treated as an artful and dangerous artifice. They hinted to the king, that he had already raised a jealousy in the prince of Orange; and that his majesty would one day have reason to fear a shoot from a stock that had given so much trouble to our kings. Henry was so far influenced by these insinuations, that when I went to ask some favours of him for the mother and brother of Coligny, he dwelt continually upon what he had heard, and had given but too much credit to, and appeared to me not only full of indifference for the death of Coligny, but also so greatly prejudiced against the whole family, that I desisted from a solicitation which could not but be prejudicial to myself, my connections and conformity of religion with the deceased considered.

The king, at his return to Fontainebleau, had the pleasure to find the queen in as good a state of health as he left her. He was seldom from her during her pregnancy, and took all possible care of her health*. In a letter he wrote to me some days before the queen lay in, he says, "Bring no people of business with you at this time; no mention must be made of it during the first week of my wife's lying in; we shall have sufficient employment to hinder her from getting cold."

At length, the moment that was to fill the king, the queen, and the whole kingdom with joy, arriv-

* "We read," says Bayle, in the *Rep. de Let.* for January, 1686, "that Henry recommended to Louis a Bourgeois, a very skilful midwife, who laid the queen, to

"perform her office so carefully, "as that there might be no occasion for employing a man-midwife. Since this, added he, would "shock female modesty."

ed; the queen was, on the 17th of September*, 1601. delivered of a son, whose strong health, as well as the queen's, filled the kingdom with the most agreeable hopes†. I believe I may venture to affirm, that this incident gave me more joy than any one else. I was attached to the king's person by the most tender ties of affection, an affection which I felt in a higher degree than the most faithful of his subjects, and was therefore more interested in his happiness. He was so well convinced of this truth, that he did me the honour to give me notice of the birth of his son in a billet, which, at ten o'clock at night, he sent from Fontainebleau to Paris, where I then was; it contained only these few words: "The queen is just delivered of a son; I send you the news, that you may rejoice with me." Besides this billet, which he wrote as to a friend, he sent me another the next morning by La-Varenne, as grand master of the ordnance; he there mentioned the birth of the Dauphin as an occasion of inexpressible delight to him, "Not so much, said he, for the near concern I have in this incident, as for the general good of my subjects." He ordered me to fire the cannon of the arsenal; which was performed in such a manner, that the report was heard even at Fontainebleau. On this occasion it was not necessary to order public rejoicings: all his majesty's subjects, from the first to the meanest, concurred in giving demonstrations of it, in which fear and policy had no part.

The king's satisfaction was only interrupted by a slight indisposition, which he had drawn upon him-

* On Thursday night, about midnight.

† Preface says, "The king, imploring the blessing of heaven upon the infant, gave him also his own benediction, and put his sword into his hand, praying God, that he would be pleased to give him grace to make use of

"it only for his glory, and the defence of his people." Matthieu speaks in the very same terms: "My dearest, says he to the queen, be of good cheer, for God has granted us what we wanted." This writer adds, that a shock of an earthquake was felt two hours after midnight. Tom. II. l. iii. p. 441.

1601. self. La-Riviere * was his first physician, a man who had little more religion than those generally have that blend it with the profession of judicial astrology; yet the world did him the honour to suppose, that he concealed the principles of a protestant under the appearance of a catholic. Henry, who already felt a tenderness for his son, that filled him with an eager anxiety to know his fate, having heard that La-Riviere had often succeeded wonderfully in his predictions, commanded him to calculate the Dauphin's nativity with all the ceremonies of his art; and that the exact moment of his birth might be known, had carefully sought for the most excellent watch that could be procured. It appeared, that the king thought no more of this design till about a fortnight after, when he and I being alone together, the conversation turned upon the predictions of La-Brosse, which I have formerly mentioned, concerning his majesty and me, which we had found so exactly accomplished. Henry's inclination to make the experiment with his son receiving new strength by this discourse, he ordered La-Riviere to be sent for.

The physician, without taking any notice of it, had proceeded in his work. "M. de La-Riviere," said the king to him, we have been talking of "astrology; what have you discovered concerning "my son?" "I had begun my calculations, replied La-Riviere, but I left them unfinished, not "caring any longer to amuse myself with a science "which I have always believed to be in some degree criminal." The king immediately discovered that this answer was not sincere, and that he concealed his thoughts, either through an apprehension of offending his majesty, or from an effect of ill-humour, whim, or the caution of an astrologer, who held it dangerous to disclose his secrets. "I see "plainly, said Henry, that you are not restrained "by motives of conscience; you are not of the

* La-Riviere succeeded D'Alibouft in the place of first physician: he had been in the family of the duke of Bouillon, who resigned him to the king.

“ number of persons that are so very scrupulous; 1601.
“ but, in reality, you are afraid of not being able
“ to tell me truth, or of making me angry; but
“ whatever it be, I will know it, and I command
“ you, on my displeasure, to speak freely.” La-
Riviere suffered himself to be pressed still longer;
and at last, with a discontented air, either real or
dissembled, said “ Sire, your son will live out the
“ common age of a man, and will reign longer
“ than you; but his inclination and yours will be
“ very different; he will be obstinate in his opini-
“ ons, often governed by his own whims, and
“ sometimes by those of others: it will be safer then
“ to think than to speak: impending ruin threatens
“ your former society: all the effects of your pru-
“ dence will be destroyed: he will perform great
“ things, will be fortunate in his designs, and make
“ a great figure in Europe; in his time there will
“ be a vicissitude of peace and war: he will have
“ children; and after him things will grow worse.
“ This is all you can know from me, and more than
“ I had resolved to tell you.” The king, after
musing a little while on what he had heard, said to
La-Riviere, “ you mean the protestants, I know;
“ but you speak thus because you are well inclined
“ towards them.” “ I understand, said La-Rivi-
“ ere, what you would have, but I shall say no
“ more.” His majesty and I continued together a
long time in conversation, making reflections on
every word that had been spoken by La-Riviere,
which remained strongly on the king’s mind.

It was not possible for me to stay long at Fon-
tainebleau; but the king continued to give me, with
great kindness, an account of every thing that hap-
pened. “ You cannot imagine,” says he in one of
his letters, “ how well my wife is recovered of her
“ lying-in; she dresses her head herself, and talks
“ already of getting up.” In another, nine days
after her delivery, he says, “ The queen goes al-
“ ready into her closet; she has a constitution sur-
“ prisingly

1601. "prisingly strong: my son likewise is very well, I
 "thank God: these are the best news I can send a
 "faithful and affectionate servant, whom I tenderly
 "love *." Henry sent his son to Saint-Germain to
 be nursed, on account of the goodness of the air:
 and by one of those little strokes of popularity which
 shew the heart better than more ostentatious actions,
 he would have him shewn to all Paris; for which
 purpose, he was carried openly through the midst of
 this great city. The Parisians, by repeated accla-
 mations, expressed their pleasure at this sight.

The king had made a promise to the queen that,
 if she brought him a son, he would present her with
 the castle of Monceaux. "My wife," said he, in
 a letter to me, "has gained Monceaux, by giving
 "me a son; therefore I desire you will send for the
 "president Forget, to confer with him about this
 "affair, and take his advice concerning the security
 "that must be given to my children, for the sum
 "which I pay for Monceaux." The city of Paris
 having likewise promised the queen a present of a suit
 of tapestry hangings for her lying-in, his majesty,
 in this letter, reminded me to demand it: an infant
 † was born in Spain, about the same time that
 Providence gave a prince to France.

The negotiation, so many years depending with
 the grand duke of Florence, was concluded this year:
 that the reader may understand the occasion of it, it
 is necessary he should know, that, under the reign
 of Henry the third, Ferdinand de Medicis, grand
 duke of Florence, took advantage of the troubles
 that then raged in France, to possess himself of the
 little isles of Pomègue, Ratoneau, and If, with its
 castle in the neighbourhood of Marseille. Henry,
 fully resolved to make the grand duke restore them,
 ordered d'Offat, who was then on the other side of

* The original of this letter of
 Henry IV. to M. de Sully is still
 extant; it is dated from Fontaine-
 bleau, the 27th of August. Cabi-
 net de M. le duc de Sully.

† Anna Maria Mauriette, after-
 wards queen of France, born the
 22d of September.

the Alps, to demand them, in the year 1568. The grand duke not daring to refuse them absolutely, represented only, that he had expended great sums of money upon these isles, which he could not resolve to lose: d'Ossat of himself removed this obstacle, by engaging that the king his master should indemnify him for these expences, by paying him three hundred thousand crowns, for which twelve of the richest and most considerable persons in France should be security*, as if his majesty alone had not been sufficient to answer for so small a sum. The king, without greatly attending to this condition, ratified this treaty; and a short time after the chevalier Vinta was sent by the duke of Florence to conclude, with Gondy, the business of the isles upon this plan.

The two agents did not go out of the council to seek for their securities, and the affair was proposed to me among the rest: this method of proceeding with a king, whose power no part of Europe was ignorant of, appeared to me so uncommon, that I could not help laughing at those who mentioned it to me. Villeroi took pains to represent to me the necessity of disengaging d'Ossat from his word: I replied, that there never had been any bankers in my family; for indeed, this was rather the business of bankers than of gentlemen. None of the others, said Villeroi, have made any difficulty about it. I believe it, answered I with some indignation, for they are all either descended from traders or lawyers. Hereupon there arose a dispute in the coun-

* This is, in effect, the import of the fifth article of the treaty that passed on the 1st of May, 1598, between the king of France and the grand duke of Tuscany, by the intervention of cardinal d'Ossat, which may be seen at full length at the end of the collection of this cardinal's letters. The duke of Sully does not here reproach M. d'Ossat with any thing which he had not already excused in the letter which he wrote to his majesty, on the 5th of May, 1598, imme-

diately after the conclusion of this treaty, and likewise in that to M. de Villeroi, of the 4th of August following. He afterwards cleared himself more fully, in a long memorial, which is also inserted at the end of this collection. However, we cannot think the reasons which M. de Sully produces against this convention groundless, nor believe that the duke of Florence would have broke the treaty without that condition.

1601. cil, which was reported to the king, who only smiled and said, they had done wrong to mention it to me without first informing him, since he had not acquainted me with it himself. I am astonished, added he, that he did not give a still ruder answer: you cannot be ignorant of his temper, and how highly he values himself upon the nobility of his birth: let this affair be concluded without his or any other persons entering into any obligation: I gave no permission to the bishop of Rennes to agree to such an expedient. The grand duke did not allow himself to be solicited upon this head; he set the king free from the obligation of the twelve securities out of regard to his person. The act for it was passed on the fourth of August, 1593, but the affair was on neither side concluded till the chevalier Vinta arrived in 1601.

I was likewise employed to settle certain estates in Piedmont, for which the count of Soissons was desirous of treating with his majesty: they came to him by the death of the princefs of Conti, in right of his wife who was of the house of Montaffié*. My report was not very favourable for the count: I represented to the king, that these estates, which had been too highly valued, were likewise subject to so much litigation, and were so disadvantageously situated, that these considerations ought greatly to lessen the price. The count of Soissons thought proper to dissemble the resentment he entertained against me for this declaration.

Fresne-Canaye † was appointed ambassador to Venice, and Bethune my brother to Rome, to the great mortification of the other ministers, especially Villeroy and Sillery, with whom I had often disputes,

* The prince of Conti was first married to Jane de Coëme, lady Bonnetable, and widow of Lewis count de Montaffié in Piedmont: and the count de Soissons had married Anne de Montaffié, daugh-

ter to that Lewis by the said Jane de Coëme.

† Philip Canaye de Fresne: Philip de Bethune, count de Selles and de Charost.

which the king had many times endeavoured to prevent. These two gentlemen had undertaken to exclude me from any concern in foreign affairs, the cognizance of which they pretended belonged only to them. The nomination to embassies falling under this head, they told his majesty, in my presence, that, for the embassy to Rome, they had abler persons to propose to it than Bethune, who, they said, had no knowledge of the affairs of that court, and had yet performed no considerable service to the state. My brother had, however, already been charged with the embassy to Scotland, of which he had acquitted himself well; and it could not be denied that he was circumspect, wise, and honest; qualities which, in my opinion, are not among the least that are essential to an ambassador. What these gentlemen said, therefore, was as false as it was contemptuous; and this I made them sensible of in my answer, by shewing them the value of those services which the state received from the military art, and which those gentlemen seemed to place below all others.

Villeroi, piqued in his turn that I had not given the first rank to his, maintained his cause with great heat and animosity. His majesty found himself obliged to command us to be silent, telling us, that he was offended at our holding such discourse in his presence; and that, without entering into a discussion of our services, we ought to be satisfied that he was pleased with them. I asked the king's pardon for daring, after this prohibition, to add a few words to close the mouths of persons who so unjustly placed the lazy business of the law, and the quiet employments of the cabinet, above the toils, the dangers, and expence of the military professions; and I truly spoke my sentiments of such partiality. "Well, well," said Henry, interrupting me, "I pardon you all, and take your words, as I must, but upon condition, that, for the future, you will avoid these little debates, and that

" when

1601. " when one of you recommends his friend to my
 " favour, the others do not oppose it, but submit to
 " my choice: at present I determine in favour of
 " the sieur de Bethune, whose family, wisdom,
 " probity, and even capacity, I esteem, having em-
 " ployed him in many affairs both of peace and
 " war, which he has acquitted himself of worth-
 " ily." The king promised Villeroi that, after my
 brother's return, he would dispose of the embassy to
 Rome according to his recommendation. He then
 put an end to his walk, which this quarrel had pro-
 tracted to more than two hours, and went to din-
 ner. I went several times this year to Fontaine-
 bleau, to receive his majesty's orders concerning
 affairs that could no otherwise be communicated to
 him, and, being often and for a considerable time
 at a distance from each other, I received, as usual,
 a great number of letters from this prince: that in
 which he mentions the marechal d'Ornano *, who
 had given him some causes of complaint, has some-
 thing singular in it. " I never, says Henry, saw so
 " much obstinacy and ignorance together in one
 " man, but I pronounced him dangerous; he has
 " reached the summit of insolence. Take care that
 " he gives me no occasion to be convinced what
 " he is, that is, unworthy of the honours that I
 " have bestowed on him: his fidelity only could
 " deserve them; his many acts of disobedience will
 " soon take away all claim to that character: to
 " say the truth, I am quite tired of him." The
 states of Languedoc meeting this year, the king
 wrote to me, that he must transfer the place of their
 sitting to the Lower Languedoc, " that my servants,
 " said he, may not go first to those of the league."
 In another letter, he ordered me to send for some
 foals of his breed of horses † at Meun; and in ano-

* Alphonso d'Ornano, son to
 San-Pietro de Bastelica, a colonel
 of the Swiss.

† "From his early years," says
 Brantome, speaking of Henry II.

in his *Vies des hommes illustres*,
 tom. II. p. 24. "he was always
 " very fond of the exercise of
 " riding, and kept always a great
 " number of them in his grand

ther, to give two hundred crowns to Garnier his preacher in Advent and Lent; the rest, which contain only a detail of slight circumstances, I suppress, although they are proofs of the extreme vigilance and attention of this prince to matters of the smallest consequence. 1601.

I shall comprise, in one article, with which the Memoirs of this year will be concluded, all that relates to marechal Biron, of whose revolt there was at length the most convincing proofs. After the king had been at Lyons, and had there entertained very strong suspicions against this marechal, his majesty had a private conversation with him in the convent of the Cordeliers, and appeared so well informed of all his transactions with the duke of Savoy, that Biron, either because he then thought that, after such a discovery, all he could now do was to repair his fault, or that he sought only to

“stables of Tournelles, which were the principal, as also at Muns, at St. Leger, and at Oyon, under the inspection of M. de Boissy master of the horse, the most valuable part of which was his breeding mares, wherein he took great delight.” He adds, that, this prince having one day shewn his stables to the emperor’s master of the horse, the latter told him, that his master had not near so fine a set of horses, extolling them very highly, especially as the greatest part were of his own breeding. The troubles, during the last reigns, were the cause that the king’s breeding stables had then fallen into decay, and were in a worse condition than they were under Henry II. That of Meun, or Mehun, in Berry, was the only place of those before mentioned, where horses were bred for the king’s use; and these stables were very inconsiderable, as may be seen from the archives of the secretary of the king’s household, which are kept at Petitperes in

Paris, where Meun is called Main, apparently to distinguish it from another Meun upon the Indre, that is also in Berry.

In 1604, the duke de Bellegarde, master of the horse, caused Mark Antony de Bazy, captain of the breeding stables, to remove the king’s set of mares to St. Leger, a forest belonging to the crown. In 1618 some considerable additions and improvements were made; and greater still about 1665, when the late M. Colbert, minister of state, enlarged the bounds, made parks therein, and got together a great number of stoned horses and young colts, by means of Alain de Garfaut, who was then captain. It continued in this state till 1715, at which time it began to be settled in Normandy, under the direction of Francis Gideon de Garfaut, Lewis de Lorfaine count d’Armagnac being then master of the horse in France: since this last establishment, it has every day more the appearance of the stables of the most powerful prince in Europe.

1601.

deceive the king, confessed to him, that he had not been able to resist the offers made to him by the duke of Savoy, joined to his promise of giving him the princess * his daughter to wife. He asked the king's pardon for these proceedings, and protested to him, with the utmost appearance of sincerity, that he would never again suffer himself to be intoxicated with such expectations.

Henry thought he might depend upon a promise, which was nevertheless forgot in the instant that it was made. Biron resumed his first designs; went, according to his custom, at different times into the provinces, caressed all the malecontents he found amongst the gentry, entertained them continually with the injustice he received from the king, and his credit and the correspondence he carried on without the kingdom. He entered into stronger engagements than ever with Bouillon, d'Entraques, d'Auvergne, and others †. He, who was pride and fierceness itself, laid such a restraint upon his inclinations, as to appear to the soldiers the most humane and affable man in the world, and drew the affections of the mob by playing the hypocrite and the devotee; for what appearance will not ambition assume to attain its end? Hitherto, however, it might still have been doubted, whether he had not concealed his designs within his own breast, and if this

* The marechal de Biron, by marrying the duke of Savoy's third daughter, was to have received from the king of Spain, and that duke, the seigniorship and investiture of Burgundy, Franche Comté, and the County de Charlois; this was one part of the grand project of both these courts, which consisted in dismembering, in this manner, the kingdom of France, and parceling it out among the governors of its provinces. The proof of this may be seen in Vittorio Siri, Mem. rec. vol. I. p. 103. 127. who likewise extols the services which

the count de Bethune, our author's brother, performed on this occasion, to Henry IV. during his embassy at Rome.

† The author says nothing, in all this account, of the conspiracy of the marechal Biron, his imprisonment, and the process against him, but what is confirmed by the histories and memoirs of that time; they mention these extravagant words of his; "The king does not at all hurt me, for I know how to be revenged on crowned heads, and even emperors." Matthieu, tom. II. liv. 2. p. 333.

conduct was not an effect of that disposition which is observable in many persons, who, by their discourse, appear restless, disturbed, and fond of novelties, yet are far from any intention of throwing themselves headlong into rebellion. 1601:

Hence arose Henry's suspense concerning the conduct of marechal Biron, though he still continued to have him carefully observed, and could not help being moved at the accounts that were brought him, of his conduct in the last journey he had taken to Dijon, where he had passed the end of the preceding year and the beginning of this. Biron, who on his side had his spies at court, being apprehensive of the impression which his behaviour made on the king, thought proper to write to me on that subject. His letter is dated the third of January; it turned only upon the ill offices that were done him with the king, and the injustice even his majesty did him in believing him capable of designs he had never entertained. He excused his journey to Burgundy, on account of some domestic affairs which made it absolutely necessary; and assured me, that he should leave that province in two days: he concluded with entreating me to believe all that would be told me from him by Prevot, one of his agents, whom he had sent to me. This letter was too soon followed by incontestable proofs of his treachery, to make it be thought sincere; and I was so far from believing his professions in it, that they only increased my suspicions.

During the king's stay at Calais, he received still clearer and more circumstantial informations against Biron, doubtless because this marechal, believing himself less suspected than before, took greater liberties than usual: but Henry, instead of taking those measures that in prudence ought to have been no longer delayed, could not yet look upon this man as incurable; and resolved, if possible, to bring him back to his duty, by gentleness, kindness, and such distinctions as make the strongest impressions

1601. upon the heart of an honest man. Biron having demanded a gratuity of thirty thousand crowns from his majesty, the king thought it very reasonable, and granted it immediately; and because that no obstacles should retard the payment of it, this prince ordered me to take proper measures to satisfy Biron without delay; accordingly I paid him instantly one half of the sum in ready money, and assigned him the other half at the expiration of a year.

Biron thought there was a necessity for coming to thank me for this favour; he told me, that he was more obliged to me for it than the king, complaining to me that he had been forgotten and even despised by this prince, now that he had no longer occasion for his sword, this sword, said he, that has placed him upon the throne. It was impossible for me to keep silence upon this occasion; I represented to the marechal, with a kind of reproach, that he accused Henry so much the more unjustly, as this prince, to whom alone he was obliged for this gratuity, had not disdained to solicit himself for its payment: hence I took occasion to speak with still greater freedom to Biron; I remonstrated to him that, although he should even have proofs of his neglect, he ought always to remember that he spoke of his master, and of a master who, by his personal qualities, still more than by his rank, engaged the esteem and respect of his subjects. I told him, that there was nothing which kings were more sensible of than disrespect to their persons, an envious desire to lessen the glory of their arms, and ingratitude for their benefits. These terms were sufficiently plain, yet I went farther, and if I did not tell Biron positively that I thought him both ingrateful and a traitor, there was nothing to hinder him from concluding it by all my discourse. I exhorted him to encourage a nobler emulation in his soul, which might give him a title to real praises; I dwelt upon the difference there was between making one's self beloved by one's prince and country, and

and endeavouring to become the object of its fear; a detestable attempt, and almost always fatal to those that make it. I told him, that if he would join with me in mutual labours for the glory of the state and the public good, we might, in some degree, make both depend upon us; he by his abilities for war, I by the share I had in the government at home; and hence we should taste the refined pleasure of knowing ourselves to be either the authors or instruments of every public benefit. I finished my remonstrance by endeavouring to prevail upon him to go and return his majesty thanks for the gratuity he had just received. 1661.

To all this Biron, neither moved to gratitude by kindness, nor to repentance by conviction, answered only by exaggerating his own merit so unseasonably and in such boastful terms, that I was now convinced of a thing I had hitherto only suspected, which was, that the harshness of his manners and the inequality of his humour proceeded from a slight taint of madness, for which so much the less allowance was to be made, as that, hindering him from reasoning, it could not hinder him from speaking and acting ill: what appeared to me a complete proof of it was, that, after what I had just said to him, having reason to look upon me as a man in whose presence he could not be too cautious, he was imprudent enough to let something escape him concerning the designs that filled his head. I took no notice of it, but he perceived the error he had been guilty of himself, and to repair it pretended to acquiesce with my reasons, and to approve of my sentiments: from that moment, I so absolutely despaired of ever being able to recall this man to his duty, that I thought mine obliged me to disguise from the king nothing which I believed him capable of doing.

It was always a part of Henry's character, to be with difficulty persuaded of the treachery of any person about him: he answered, that he knew Bi-

1601. ron perfectly well, that he was very capable of saying all that was related: but that this man, who, in consequence of his natural violence of temper, the effect of melancholy, was never contented, and exalted himself above every one else, was nevertheless, a moment after, the first to mount his horse, and dare all dangers for those whom he had railed at so much before; therefore he well deserved some indulgence for a little intemperance of tongue: that he was assured Biron would never be induced to rebel against him; that if this should happen, as he had already given a proof on those occasions where he had saved the life of this marechal, and in the last place at Fontaine-Françoise, that he did not yield to him in courage, he knew likewise how to shew him that he did not fear him. The king therefore made no alteration in his behaviour to Biron, except that he gave him still greater demonstrations of kindness, and loaded him with new honours, which he looked upon as the only remedy for his defection.

He was sent ambassador to queen Elizabeth, with whom he had a very extraordinary conversation *. He was imprudent enough not only to mention the earl of Essex to this princess, whom she had lately beheaded, but likewise to bewail the fate of that nobleman, whose great services had not been able to preserve him from so tragical an end; and Elizabeth had the complaisance, in answer to this impertinent discourse, to justify her conduct with regard to the earl, by shewing the necessity she was under to punish him: she told him, that Essex had madly engaged in schemes which greatly exceeded his abilities; and that after many proofs, and a full conviction of his rebellion, he might have still, by submission, have obtained her pardon; but that neither his friends nor his relations could prevail

* A particular account of this embassy, may be seen in Matthieu, tom. II. l. 2. p. 246, and seq.

upon him to ask it. I know not whether the queen of England perceived any marks of resemblance between the French ambassador and the English favourite, but the reasonable observations on the nature of royal heads, and the duty of subjects, with which she concluded her discourse, seemed to insinuate as much; but Biron drew no advantage from it. 1601.

At his return from London, the king appointed him likewise ambassador extraordinary to Switzerland, to renew the treaty of alliance between France and the Cantons; still continuing to believe that an employment which would take off his thoughts from arms, and engage him in a commerce with a body so wise and politic as the Helvetic Senate is, would subdue at length all inclinations to sedition: but ambition, envy, and avarice, are passions that can never be wholly quelled; and had the heart of Biron been thoroughly sounded, it might probably have been found tainted with all the three. No sooner was he returned from his second embassy, than, as if he had endeavoured to make amends for the time he had lost, he laboured more assiduously than before to bring all his chimerical schemes to perfection; either persuaded thereto by the duke of Bouillon and the count of Auvergne, who had likewise formed their party, or having drawn them into his.

To strengthen their mutual engagements, these three gentlemen signed a form of association, of which each kept an original: in this uncommon piece, which was produced in the process against marechal Biron, they reciprocally promised, upon the faith and word of gentlemen and men of honour, to continue united for their common safety, *to and against all, without any exception* (these terms deserve a particular observation) to keep inviolably secret whatever might be revealed to any one of them; and to burn this writing, in case any accident should happen to either of the associates. There

1601. was no prospect of succeeding in their designs, but through the operation of Spain and Savoy; they therefore renewed their correspondence with these two powers, and on their side, to second their endeavours, went about picking up all the disaffected persons they could find amongst the gentry and soldiers. To draw into rebellion many of the towns at the greatest distance from Paris, particularly those in the provinces of Guienne and Poictou, they took advantage of the sedition occasioned by the establishment of the penny in the livre, which I had opposed so ardently in the assembly *des Notables*, and which I had not afterwards the power to suppress; however, it could not possibly be raised according to the original plan: it had been changed into a subsidy of eight hundred thousand franks, of which one half was sunk in the taille, and the other in the customs.

Biron and his associates, to encrease the discontent of these people, already strongly incited by that impost, persuaded them, that to complete their calamities, they would shortly be burthened with a duty upon salt; and many persons were kept in their pay in each of these provinces, to terrify the inhabitants with perpetual alarms. What government can expect to be free from these disturbers of public tranquility, if that of Henry the great, so wise, mild, and popular, was not? This evil, however, took its rise from the unhappy influence the civil wars had on the manners of the people; that was the poison which produced those turbulent spirits to whom quiet was painful, and the happiest condition, a languid inactivity: hence arises that restless ambition, which keeps their reason enslaved, makes them murmur at heaven, and quarrel with mankind for torments they bring on themselves; and raises their malice against princes, whose whole power, so obnoxious to them, is not sufficient to gratify their inordinate desires.

Henry's

Henry's eyes were at length opened with regard to the real character of Biron, which he had hitherto flattered himself he knew so well, and he began to fear he should be obliged to have recourse to the most violent remedy to stop the contagion: informations multiplied every day, and came from persons that could not be suspected; all agreed in the chief point of the conspiracy; some mentioned the act of association, and, having seen it, related the very terms in which it was conceived. Calvairac* gave the king the most circumstantial and most probable account that had been yet transmitted to him; besides the public rumour, he informed him, that Biron and his colleagues had received several thousand pistoles from persons who came from Spain; that they expected sums still greater, and a supply of forces; that the council of Madrid had agreed to it, on condition that the rebels should begin by seizing some strong maritime places, on the frontiers of Spain; that, conformably to this plan, enterprizes were already formed upon Blaye, Byonne, Narbonne, Marseilles, and Toulon; and that the count of Auvergne was to wait only till these were executed, to begin openly his attempt upon Saint-Flour.

All these informations made it absolutely necessary to examine the matter thoroughly. The king came on purpose to the arsenal, where he found me busy in completing the labour I had begun, to communicate to me what he had learned, and gave me the detail, leaning upon the balcony over the great walk: he went afterwards to Fontainebleau, whither I followed him; and it was in this place that we were to proceed to the last extremities with marechal Biron. He had for a long time made use of La-Fin† to carry on his foreign negotiations,

* John de Sudrie, baron de Calveyrac.

† James de La-Fin, a gentle-

man of Burgundy, of the house of Beauvais-la-Nocle; "the most dangerous man, says Prefixe,

1601. a lively, cunning, intriguing fellow, whom Bouillon and he often called their kinsman. La-Fin had been sent several times to the king of Spain, the duke of Savoy, and the count of Fuentes; but afterwards, upon some disgust Biron had given him, he retired to his house, where he remained unemployed. It was not thought impossible to gain him; and for this purpose his nephew, the vidame of Chartres*, was made use of, who endeavoured to prevail upon his uncle to come to Fontainebleau. In the mean time I returned to Paris, to make preparations for a journey his majesty thought it necessary to take immediately into all those places through which Biron had passed, namely, Poictou, Guienne, Limosin, and especially about Blois.

La-Fin having at length resolved to come to Fontainebleau, revealed all that he knew concerning Biron's conspiracy. The king was desirous that he should be detained and lodged at Mi-Voie, that he might be seen by none but those who were sent to confer with him. His majesty judging by what he had first declared, that my presence would be necessary, wrote these few words to me: "My friend, come to me immediately, on an affair that concerns my service, your honour, and our mutual satisfaction. Adieu, my dear friend." I took post immediately, and on my arrival at Fontainebleau, I met his majesty in the midst of the large avenue to the castle, ready to go to hunt. I threw myself at his feet: "My friend," said this prince

"and the greatest traitor in France:
"the king knew him well, and
"often said to the marechal, Don't
"suffer that man to come near
"you; he's a rogue, he'll be the
"death of you. He endeavoured
"to accuse the marechal de Biron,
"from a jealousy he entertained,
"that the baron de Lux had sup-
"planted him in the marechal's
"favour; and in revenge to the

"count de Fuentes, upon the dis-
"covery of his attempting to be-
"tray the latter, for that he had
"caused his secretary to be arrest-
"ed; yet that he might the better
"destroy the marechal de Biron,
"he pretended still to have the
"same attachment to him as be-
"fore."

* Pregent de La-Fin, vidame de Chartres,

to me, pressing me in his arms, "all is discovered; 1601.
 " the chief negotiator is come to ask pardon, and
 " to make a full confession: in his accusation he in-
 " cludes a great number of persons of high rank,
 " some of whom have particular reasons to love
 " me *; but he is a great liar, and I am deter-
 " mined to believe nothing he says without good
 " proofs: he accuses one man, amongst the rest,
 " whom you little think of; come, guess who this
 " traitor is." "That is not in my power, sire,"
 I replied. After pressing me some time longer, but
 to no purpose, "You know him well, said he; it is
 " M. de Rosny." "If the others are no more
 " guilty than I am, replied I, smiling, your ma-
 " jesty need not give yourself much trouble about
 " them." "I believe so, said the king; and to
 " shew you that I do, I have ordered Bellievre and
 " Villeroi to bring you all the accusations against
 " you and the others; I have even told La-Fin,
 " that I would have him see you, and speak to you
 " freely: he is concealed at Mi-Voie, and will
 " meet you on the road from Moret; appoint the
 " hour and place, and none shall be present at your
 " conference."

I could not imagine how my name happened to be
 found in this wicked cabal; whether it came from
 some of Biron's people, who supposed me to be a
 friend of their master, or from Biron himself and
 his associates, who thought it was lawful for them
 to make use of it to the Spanish ministers, to swell
 the number of their partisans; or of the malecon-
 tents of the kingdom; it was not impossible, that

* We may, doubtless, rank among the number of these, the charge which La-Fin brought against Biron, of his having attempted the king's life, and the Dauphin's, according to Chron. Septennaire, since his friends made use of the proofs they had of the contrary, to obtain his pardon:

"Sire, we have at least this advantage," said M. de La-Force to Henry IV. throwing himself at his feet, "that there is nothing proved as to his having made any attempt on your majesty's person." Vol. 9129 of the MSS. in the king's library.

1601. two letters I wrote to the marechal, through zeal rather than complaisance, might have involved me in the number of these conspirators; and the rather because, in allusion to the conversation that passed between Biron and me, which I have formerly mentioned, I told him plainly, that there was nothing to hinder him from making himself useful and dear to the kingdom, by those measures I had marked out to him: I likewise told him, that although I was almost always about the king's person, yet I had never heard him express any resentment against him: and I advised Biron not to assert such a thing publicly, because the world would not fail to believe, and to report, that he only feigned to have received some disgust from his majesty, because his own conscience reproached him with having deserved it. Thus what I said with an intention to bring Biron back to his duty, was interpreted to my disadvantage.

Henry's opinion, as he has since told me, was, that this accusation of me did not take its rise either from Biron or any of his associates, but from La-Fin alone, at the instigation of some persons who hoped by that means to accomplish my disgrace: however that may be, it made so little impression on the king's mind, that his majesty, who had lately given me the government of the Bastile, and intended that the patent for it should not appear in my name, but only in that of La Chevalerie, altered his opinion on this occasion, and caused it to be expedited under mine, knowing none, he said, but me, by whom he could expect to be served with fidelity, in case he should have birds in the cage. Accordingly, Villeroi was ordered to bring me the patent a few days after, which was the beginning of the following year.

I had a long conversation * with La-Fin alone, in the forest; after which, Believre, Villeroi, and

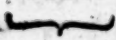
* Matthieu, vol. II. b. iii. p. 482.

myself,

myself, examined, with great care, all the papers that contained any proofs against the duke of Bouillon, marechal Biron, and the count of Auvergne; such as letters, memorandums, and other writings of the same kind. The names of many persons besides these three gentlemen were mentioned in them; but as it was probably with as little justice as mine own, which was there likewise, I shall not, on so slight a foundation, give them a place in these Memoirs, which, to distrustful persons, might make them still more liable to suspicion, than the depositions of La-Fin. After this examination we returned to his majesty, and a council being held, the result of it was, to keep every thing secret, that Biron might not be warned of the measures that were to be taken to bring him to court, that he might be arrested with the greater security. It was likewise resolved, that his majesty should set out immediately on the journey before mentioned. We shall see in the following year what these measures produced.

It is necessary to take some notice of what happened this year in the several states of Europe: the court of London was thrown into confusion by a rebellion that was stirred up by the Spaniards in Ireland: Elizabeth sent to besiege Kinsale, the strongest place that the rebels were in possession of; the earl of Tyrone, their leader, and Don Alonzo del Campo, who commanded the Spanish troops in Ireland, hastened to relieve it with all the forces they could get together, which were cut in pieces by the lord Piercy. Alonzo remained prisoner there, and Kinsale surrendered.

Very different reports were raised concerning the destination of the fleet which was fitted out about this time by the king of Spain, but nothing could be certainly known about it; for after it had rode some time in the Mediterranean, it was attacked by a tempest, and was obliged to re-enter the port of Barcelona, which it did in a very shattered condition:

1601.  tion: the command of this fleet had been given to prince Doria. Probably it was designed against Portugal, where the true or the false Don Sebastian* still continued to have a great number of partisans: some secrets which he revealed, that it seemed could have been only known to the king of Portugal; certain natural marks upon his body which he shewed, and some other circumstances of the same kind, confirmed his assertion. However, to confess the truth, none of these proofs appeared unanswerable; nevertheless the king of Spain thought it the wisest way to rid himself privately of this pretended prince: so that the truth was never known, or at least to a few persons only, whose interest it was not to publish it.

A diet was convened at Ratisbon, with intention to make some composition between the popish and protestant religions, but this came to nothing: upon the first question proposed, which was concerning the authority of the holy scriptures †, such heat was

* There is something surely very surprising and uncommon in this perfect resemblance of all the parts, features, and even the defects of the body, which, according to all the historians, was between the real Don Sebastian and this man, who is said to have been a native of Calabria; and it is no less difficult to guess, how he could come to the knowledge of the circumstances of this king of Portugal's life, which were so peculiar and secret as to astonish all the world. The Portuguese, still more deceived through their natural affection for the blood of their kings, as also through their hatred for Spain (this last motive might likewise be applied to M. de Sully) than from any evidence they had, persisted in supporting the claims of this impostor. The Septennaire is very favourable to him, an. 1601. p. 217. See what has been said a little higher. The Spaniards were

so thoroughly convinced of their having discovered the cheat, when Ferdinand, grand duke of Tuscany, had delivered him up into the hands of the Viceroy of Naples, that they no longer scrupled to expose him as a public gazing-stock, mounted him on an ass; after which they sent him to the galleys. See Matthieu, tom. II. l. iii. p. 451.

† This question was publicly debated, during several sittings, between the catholic divines of Maximilian duke of Bavaria, and the protestant divines of Ludovic count palatine of Neubourg, and of the electors of Saxony and Brandenburg; the two first of these princes assisted at it in person, and were obliged to put an end to this dispute, the advantage in which, each of the parties, as is always the case, afterwards ascribed to themselves. De Thou, Chron. Septen. for the year 1601.

raised

raised among the disputants, that an accommodation became impracticable. The papists maintained, that their authority was derived wholly from the consent of the church, that they might add the prerogative of infallibility to the other rights with which they have so liberally, and with so little reason, invested the Pope: the protestants treated this doctrine with contempt and ridicule.

1601.

The war in Transylvania still continued disadvantageous to the Vaivodes, Batory and Michael, who had revolted from the emperor; they were defeated by George Basse, and Clausembourg was taken. The duke of Mercœur signalized himself no less at the head of the Imperial troops against the Turks*; he took Albe-Royale in Hungary, a fortress esteemed impregnable; and afterwards drove away the Turks from it, who had returned to besiege it. The archduke †, less fortunate than Mercœur, was beaten before Canise; and the knights of Malta took and destroyed the city of Passava in the Morea.

Constantinople and the palace of the Grand Signor was in no less commotion, through the discontent of the Janizaries, who proceeded so far as to strangle, in the presence of Mahomet III. himself, seven of the favourites of his seraglio, and threatened to depose him: he was a man, indeed, whose vices rendered him unworthy of a throne; he was cruel, treacherous, slothful, avaritious, and sunk in every kind of voluptuousness.

* The duke of Mercœur, by his great exploits, acquired the reputation of one of the first warriors of his time. See them, as also the other facts that are here spoken of, in the historians.

† Ferdinand of Austria.

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